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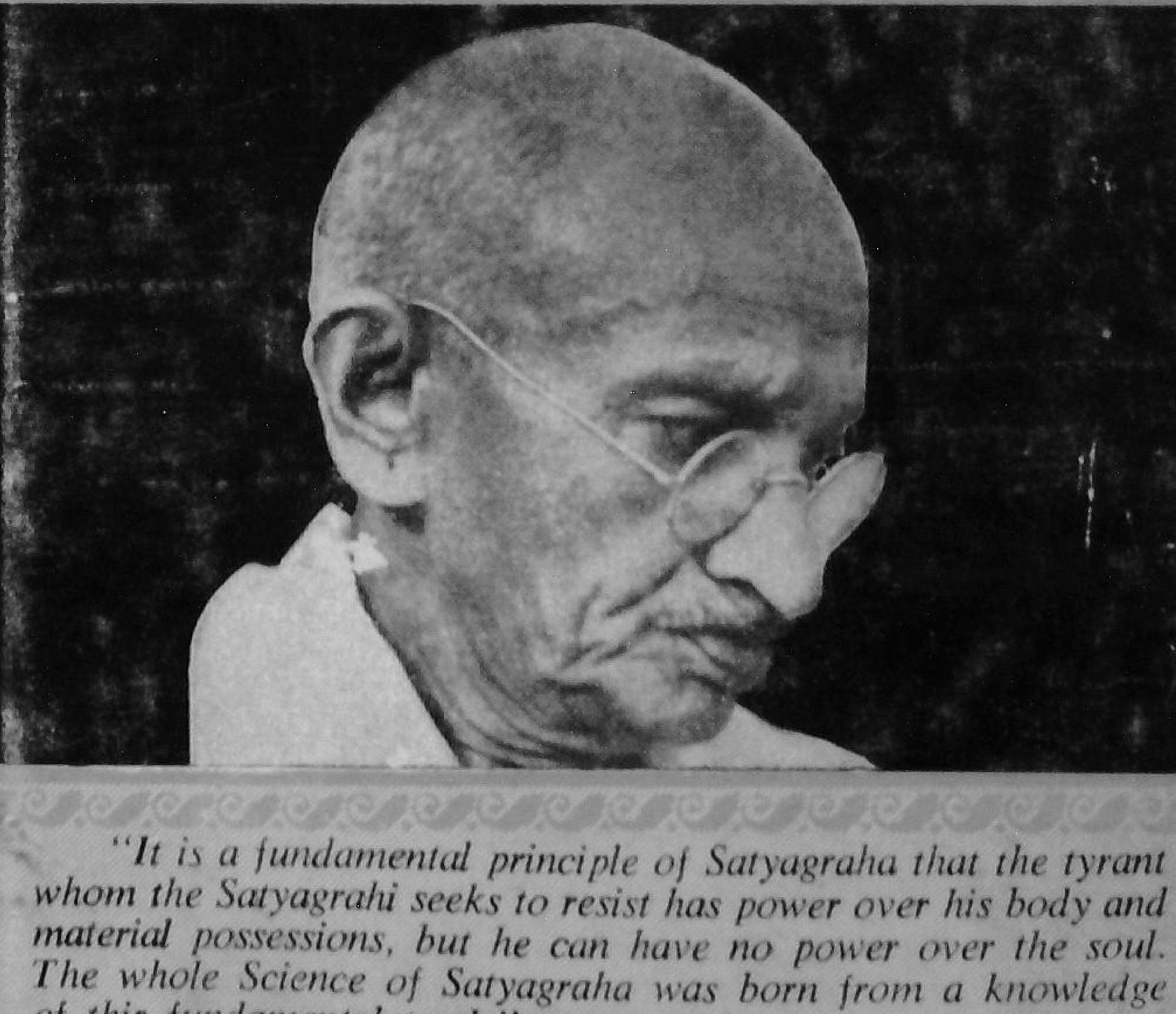

"It is a fundamental principle of Satyagraha that the tyrant whom the Satyagrahi seeks to resist has power over his body and material possessions, but he can have no power over the soul. The whole Science of Satyagraha was born from a knowledge of this fundamental truth."

M. K. Gandhi

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• BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN, BOMBAY - 7 •

A SCIENCE IN THE MAKING

"I am myself daily growing in the knowledge of Satyagraha. I have no text-book to consult in time of need, not even the Gita which I have called my dictionary.

"Satyagraha, as conceived by me, is a science in the making. It may be that what I claim to be a science may prove to be no science at all, and may well prove to be the musings and doings of a fool, if not a mad man. It may be that what is true in Satyagraha is as ancient as the hills.

* * *

"Satyagraha by the vast mass of mankind will be impossible, if they had all to assimilate the doctrine in all its implications. I cannot claim to have assimilated all its implications, nor do I claim even to know them all.

"A soldier of an army does not know the whole of the military science; so also does a Satyagrahi not know the whole Science of Satyagraha. It is enough if he trusts his commander and honestly follows his instructions, and is ready to suffer unto death without bearing malice against the so-called enemy."

—*M. K. GANDHI*

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THE SCIENCE OF SATYAGRAHA

BY

M. K. GANDHI

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EDITED & PUBLISHED
BY
ANAND T. HINGORANI

1962
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BOMBAY-7

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PREFACE

WHAT is *Satyagraha?* Posing this question and answering it himself, Gandhiji says: "Just as the sun cannot be *fully* described even by the myriad-tongued Sheshnaga, so also the sun of *Satyagraha* cannot be adequately described. And though we always see the sun but know really very little of it, even so we do ever seem to see the sun of *Satyagraha*, but we know precious little about it." And yet, here in these pages, the reader will find presented to him by Gandhiji a very clear and convincing exposition of the Science of *Satyagraha* and its offshoots—Passive Resistance, Non-co-operation, Civil Disobedience and the like.

Though Gandhiji, with his innate sense of humility, has characterized this Science of *Satyagraha* as "still in the making," yet for us, the ordinary mortals, it seems to be all-sufficing. *Satyagraha*, as evolved, developed, prefected and applied by Gandhiji, has no parallel in the world; it has been such an inspiring force and an elevating influence that it has transformed the lives and conduct of millions and millions of people throughout the world and made of them men in the real sense of the word.

Adherence to the eternal principle of Truth and insistence upon it by self-suffering constitute the fundamental basis of *Satyagraha*. Since it springs from Truth and Non-violence, *Satyagraha* is the activest

force that one can ever have. This Truth-force, also called by Gandhiji Love-force or Soul-force, is far mightier than the mightiest forces of the physical sciences. Whereas *Satyagraha* stands for the dignity of man and triumph of the spirit over body, love over hatred, truth over untruth, non-violence over violence, the physical forces, like those of the atom and nuclear bomb, stand for the reverse, *i.e.*, death and destruction and brutalization of human nature.

Satyagraha rules out violence or coercion even of the subtlest type and is, therefore, capable of universal application. It can be applied with success in the domestic no less than in the public or political sphere. In fact, there is not a department of life where it cannot be offered with justification, provided, however, due care is taken to see that the person offering it is of the proper stamp and that the cause is just. For, *Satyagraha* cannot be offered in an unjust cause.

In the pursuit of what he regards as Truth, the votary has to be humble, exercise patience and invite self-suffering, and, if necessary, has even to lay down his life with a smile on his lips. He has to harbour no ill-will and spirit of retaliation against the so-called opponent. It should be enough for him to suffer and seek to convert the opponent by an appeal to his heart. He must have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature, and, above all, a living faith in God—his Final Refuge. There are many other qualities also, such as self-discipline, self-control and self-purification,

which the votary has to cultivate in order to be a perfect *Satyagrahi* who knows no defeat.

Thus, it will be seen that *Satyagraha* is not something which can be undertaken light-heartedly as seems to be, unfortunately, the tendency today. Today, all sorts of *Duragrahas* are being indulged in and organized in the sacred name of *Satyagraha* even by those who should know better. Let, therefore, Gandhiji's this exposition of the Science of *Satyagraha* be an eye-opener to them and lead them to the correct appraisal of the true character and contents of a genuine *Satyagraha*. And let this book also serve as a text-book, to consult in time of need, for those who are seekers after Truth and who, while being pitted against the forces of injustice, tyranny and untruth, would wish to profit by the unique experiences and experiments of Gandhiji in this field.

ANAND T. HINGORANI

7, Edmonstone Road,
Allahabad (INDIA).

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1. RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL

I REMEMBER how one verse of Gujarati poem, which as a child I learnt at school, clung to me. In substance, it was this:

> *"If a man gives you a drink of water and you give*
> *him a drink in return, that is nothing;*
> *Real beauty consists in doing good against all evil."*

As a child, this verse had a powerful influence over me, and I tried to carry it out in practice. Then, came the *Sermon on the Mount*.... Of course, I knew the *Bhagavad Gita* in Sanskrit tolerably well, but I had not made its teaching in that particular a study. It was the *New Testament* which really awakened me to the rightness and value of Passive Resistance.

When I read in the *Sermon on the Mount* such passages as "Resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," and "Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you, that ye may be sons of your Father who is in Heaven," I was simply overjoyed, and found my own opinion confirmed where I least expected it. The *Bhagavad Gita* deepened the impression, and Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You* gave it a permanent form.

I do not like the term "Passive Resistance." It fails to convey all I mean. It describes a method, but

gives no hint of the system of which it is only a part. Real beauty, and that is my aim, is in doing good against evil. Still, I adopt the phrase because it is well known and easily understood. To me, the ideas which underlie the Gujarati hymn and the *Sermon on the Mount* should revolutionize the whole of life.

—*Speeches & Writings of M. Gandhi*: P. 109.

2. 'RESIST NOT EVIL'

PASSIVE Resistance is a misnomer. But expression has been accepted as it is popular, and has been for a long time used by those who carried out in practice the idea denoted by the term. The idea is more completely and better expressed by the term "soul-force." As such, it is as old as the human race. Active resistance is better expressed by the term "body force."

Jesus Christ, Daniel and Socrates represented the purest form of Passive Resistance or soul-force. All these teachers counted their bodies as nothing in comparison to their soul. Tolstoy was the best and brightest (modern) exponent of the doctrine. He not only expounded it, but lived according to it. In India, the doctrine was understood and commonly practised long before it came into vogue in Europe. It is easy to see that soul-force is infinitely superior to body-force. If people, in order to secure redress of wrongs, resorted to soul-force, much of the present suffering would be avoided. In any case, the wielding of this force never

causes suffering to others. So that, whenever it is misused, it only injures the users, and not those against whom it is used. Like virtue, it is its own reward. There is no such thing as failure in the use of this kind of force.

Soul Force Vs. Physical Force

'Resist not evil' means that evil is not to be repelled by evil, but by good; in other words, physical force is to be opposed not by its like but by soul-force. The same idea is expressed in Indian philosophy by the expression: 'freedom from injury to every living thing.' The exercise of this doctrine involves physical suffering on the part of those who practise it. But it is a known fact that the sum of such suffering is greater rather than less in the world. That being so, all that is necessary for those who recognize the immeasurable power of soul force, is consciously and deliberately to accept physical suffering as their lot, and, when this is done, the very suffering becomes a source of joy to the sufferer. It is quite plain that Passive Resistance, thus understood, is infinitely superior to physical force, and that it requires greater courage than the latter. No transition is, therefore, possible from Passive Resistance.... The only condition of a successful use of this force is a recognition of the existence of the soul as apart from the body, and its permanent and superior nature. And this recognition must amount to a living faith, and not a mere intellectual grasp.

—*Speeches & Writings of M. Gandhi*: P. 132.

3. DOCTRINE OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE

THE poet Tulsidas has said:

"Of religion, pity or love is the root,
as egotism of the body;
Therefore, we should not abandon pity
so long as we are alive."

This appears to me to be a scientific truth. I believe in it as much as I believe in two and two being four. The force of Love is the same as the force of the Soul or Truth. We have evidence of its working at every step. The universe would disappear without the existence of that force....

If the story of the universe had commenced with wars, not a man would have been found alive today. Those people who have been warred against have disappeared as, for instance, the natives of Australia of whom hardly a man was left alive by the intruders. Mark, please, that these natives did not use soul-force in self-defence, and it does not require much foresight to know that the Australians will share the same fate as their victims. "Those that take the sword shall perish by the sword." With us, the proverb is that professional swimmers will find a watery grave.

Force of Truth or Love

The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms, but on the force of Truth or Love. Therefore, the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the

success of this force is to be found in the fact, that, in spite of the wars of the world, it still lives on.

Thousands, indeed, tens of thousands, depend for their existence on a very active working of this force. Little quarrels of millions of families in their daily lives disappear before the exercise of this force. Hundreds of nations live in peace. History does not and cannot take note of this fact. History is really a record of every interruption of the even working of the force of Love or of the Soul. Two brothers quarrel; one of them repents and re-awakens the love that was lying dormant in him; the two again begin to live in peace; nobody takes note of this. But if the two brothers, through the intervention of solicitors or some other reason take up arms or go to law—which is another form of the exhibition of brute force,—their doings would be immediately noticed in the Press, they would be the talk of their neighbours and would probably go down to history. And, what is true of families and communities is true of nations. There is no reason to believe that there is one law for families and another for nations. History, then, is a record of an interruption of the course of Nature. Soul force being normal, is not noted in history.

A Method of Securing Rights

Passive Resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering: it is the reverse of resistance by arms. When I refuse to do a thing that is repugnant to my conscience, I use soul-force. For instance,

the Government of the day has passed a law which is applicable to me. I do not like it. If by using violence I force the Government to repeal the law, I am employing what may be termed body-force. If I do not obey the law and accept the penalty for its breach, I use soul-force. It involves sacrifice of self.

Sacrifice of Self

Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to sacrifice of others. Moreover, if this kind of force is used in a cause that is unjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his mistakes. Men have before now done many things which were subsequently found to have been wrong. No man can claim that he is absolutely in the right or that a particular thing is wrong because he thinks so; but it is wrong for him so long as that is his deliberate judgment. It is, therefore, meet that he should not do that which he knows to be wrong, and suffer the consequence whatever it may be. This is the key to the use of soul-force.

Key to Self-Rule

A man who has realized his manhood, who fears only God, will fear no one else. Man-made laws are not necessarily binding on him. Even the Government do not expect any such thing from us. They do not say: "You must do such and such a thing," but they say: "If you do not do it, we will punish you." We are sunk so low that we fancy that it is our duty and

our religion to do what the law lays down. If man will only realize that it is unmanly to obey laws that are unjust, no man's tyranny will enslave him. This is the key to self-rule or home-rule.

Majorities Vs. Minorities

It is a superstition and ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority. Many examples can be given in which acts of majorities will be found to have been wrong, and those of minorities to have been right. All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to majorities. If among a band of robbers a knowledge of robbing is obligatory, is a pious man to accept the obligation? So long as the superstition that men should obey unjust laws exists, so long will their slavery exist. And, a passive resister alone can remove such a superstition.

Use of Brute Force

To use brute-force, to use gunpowder, is contrary to Passive Resistance, for it means that we want our opponent to do by force that which we desire but he does not. And, if such a use of force is justifiable, surely he is entitled to do likewise. And so, we should never come to an agreement. We may simply fancy, like the blind horse moving in a circle round a mill, that we are making progress. Those who believe that they are not bound to obey laws which are repugnant to their conscience, have only the remedy of Passive Resistance open to them. Any other must lead to disaster.

Passive Resistance, that is, soul-force, is matchless. It is superior to the force of arms. Physical-force men are strangers to the courage that is requisite in a passive resister. Do you believe that a coward can ever disobey a law that he dislikes?

Who is The True Warrior?

What do you think? Wherein is courage required —in blowing others to pieces from behind a cannon, or with a smiling face to approach a cannon and be blown to pieces? Who is the true warrior—he who keeps death always as a bosom-friend, or he who controls the death of others? Believe me, that a man devoid of courage and manhood can never be a passive resister.

This, however, I will admit: that even a man weak in body is capable of offering this resistance. One man can offer it just as well as millions. Both men and women can indulge in it. It does not require the training of an army; it needs no jiu-jitsu. Control over the mind is alone necessary, and when that is attained, man is free like the king of the forest and his very glance withers the enemy.

An All-Sided Sword

Passive Resistance is an all-sided sword, it can be used anyhow; it blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. Without drawing a drop of blood, it produces far-reaching results. It never rusts and cannot be stolen. Competition between passive re-

sisters does not exhaust. The sword of Passive Resistance does not require a scabbard.

Kings will always use their kingly weapons. To use force is bred in them. They want to command, but those who have to obey commands do not want guns: and these are in a majority throughout the world. They have to learn either body-force or soul-force. Where they learn the former, both the rulers and the ruled become like so many mad men; but where they learn soul-force, the commands of the rulers do not go beyond the point of their swords, for true men disregard unjust commands. Peasants have never been subdued by the sword, and never will be. They do not know the use of the sword, and they are not frightened by the use of it by others. That nation is great which rests its head upon death as its pillow. Those who defy death are free from all fear. For those who are labouring under the delusive charms of brute-force, this picture is not over-drawn. The fact is that, in India, the nation at large has generally used Passive Resistance in all departments of life.[1] We cease to co-operate with our rulers when they displease us. This is Passive Resistance.

---

1. "For the many ills we suffer in India, Passive Resistance is an infallible panacea. It is worthy of careful study and I am sure it will be found that it is the only weapon that is suited to the genius of our people and our land, which is the nursery of the most ancient religions and has very little to learn from modern civilization—a civilization based on violence of the blackest type, largely a negation of the Divine in man and which is rushing headlong to its own ruin."

—*Indian Review*: Dec. 1909.

Who Can Become a Passive Resister?

To become a passive resister is easy enough, but it is also equally difficult. I have known a lad of fourteen years become a passive resister: I have known also sick people do likewise: and I have also known physically strong and otherwise happy people unable to take up Passive Resistance. After a great deal of experience, it seems to me that those who want to become passive resisters for the service of the country have to observe perfect chastity, adopt poverty, follow Truth, and cultivate fearlessness.

Necessity for Chastity and Poverty

Chastity is one of the greatest disciplines without which the mind cannot attain requisite firmness. A man who is unchaste loses stamina, becomes emasculated and cowardly. He whose mind is given over to animal passions is not capable of any great effort. This can be proved by innumerable instances. What, then, is a married person to do is the question that arises naturally, and yet it need not. When a husband and wife gratify the passions, it is no less an animal indulgence on that account. Such an indulgence, except for perpetuating the race, is strictly prohibited. But a passive resister has to avoid even that very limited indulgence because he can have no desire for progeny. A married man, therefore, can observe perfect chastity.

Just as there is necessity for chastity, so is there for poverty. Pecuniary ambition and Passive Resistance cannot well go together. Those who have money

are not expected to be indifferent about it. They must be prepared to lose every penny rather than give up Passive Resistance.

Truth Must Be Followed

Passive Resistance has been described as Truth-force. Truth, therefore, has necessarily to be followed and that at any cost. In this connection, academic questions such as whether a man may not lie in order to save a life, etc., arise, but these questions occur only to those who wish to justify lying. Those who want to follow Truth every time are not placed in such a quandary and if they are, they are still saved from a false position.

Fearlessness

Passive Resistance cannot proceed a step without fearlessness. Those alone can follow the path of Passive Resistance who are free from fear, whether as to their possessions, false honour, their relatives, the government, bodily injuries or death.

These observances are not to be abandoned in the belief that they are difficult. Nature has implanted in the human breast ability to cope with any difficulty or suffering that may come to man unprovoked. These qualities are worth having, even for those who do not wish to serve the country. Let there be no mistake, as those who want to train themselves in the use of arms are also obliged to have these qualities more or less. Everybody does not become a warrior for the

wish. A would-be warrior will have to observe chastity and to be satisfied with poverty as his lot. A warrior without fearlessness cannot be conceived of. It may be thought that he could not need to be exactly truthful, but that quality follows real fearlessness. When a man abandons Truth, he does so owing to fear in some shape or form.

Physical-Force Man Vs. Passive Resister

The above four attributes, then, need not frighten anyone. It may be as well here to note that a physical-force man has to have many other useless qualities which a passive resister never needs. And you will find that whatever extra effort a swordsman needs is due to lack of fearlessness. If he is an embodiment of the latter, the sword will drop from his hand that very moment. He does not need its support. One who is free from hatred requires no sword. A man with a stick suddenly came face to face with a lion and instinctively raised his weapon in self-defence. The man saw that he had only prated about fearlessness when there was none in him. That moment he dropped the stick and found himself free from all fear.

—*Hind Swaraj*: 1908.

4. SOUL FORCE

ITS (Passive Resistance) equivalent in the vernacular, rendered into English, means Truth-force. I think Tolstoy called it also Soul-force or Love-force, and so it is.

Carried out to its utmost limit, this force is independent of pecuniary or other material assistance; certainly, even in its elementary form, of physical force or violence. Indeed, violence is the negation of this great spiritual force, which can only be cultivated or wielded by those who will entirely eschew violence. It is a force that may be used by individuals as well as by communities. It may be used as well in political as in domestic affairs. Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility. It can be used alike by men, women and children.[1]

Soul-Force Not for The Weak

It is totally untrue to say that it is a force to be used only by the weak, so long as they are not capable of meeting violence by violence. This superstition arises from the incompleteness of the English expression. It is impossible for those who consider themselves to be weak to apply this force. Only those who realize that there is something in man which is superior to the brute nature in him, and that the latter always yields to it, can effectively be passive resisters. This force is to violence and, therefore, to all tyranny, all injustice, what light is to darkness. In politics, its use

1. "In referring to the universality of *Satyagraha*, I have time and again observed...that it is capable of application in the social no less than in the political field. It may equally be employed against Government, society, or one's own family, father, mother, husband or wife, as the case may be. For, it is the beauty of this spiritual weapon that when it is completely free from the taint of *Himsa* and its use is actuated purely and solely by love, it may be used with absolute impunity in any connection and in any circumstance whatever."

—*Young India*: March 1, 1928.

is based upon the immutable maxim that government of the people is possible only so long as they consent, either consciously or unconsciously, to be governed.

Use of The Soul-Force

All passive resisters do not understand the full value of the force, nor have we men who always from conviction refrain from violence. The use of this force requires the adoption of poverty, in the sense that we must be indifferent whether we have the wherewithal to feed or clothe ourselves.

The exercise of the purest soul force, in its perfect form, brings about instantaneous relief. For this exercise, prolonged training of the individual soul is an absolute necessity, so that a perfect passive resister has to be almost, if not entirely, a perfect man. We cannot all suddenly become such men, but if my proposition is correct—as I know it to be correct—the greater the spirit of Passive Resistance in us, the better men we will become. Its use, therefore, is I think, indisputable and it is a force which, if it became universal, would revolutionize social ideals and do away with despotisms and the ever-growing militarism under which the nations of the West are groaning and are being almost crushed to death—that militarism which promises to overwhelm even the nations of the East.[1]

---

1. "The military spirit in the West bids fair to kill the very humanity in man and reduce him to the level of the beast. What is wanted and what India has, thank God, learnt in a measure undreamt of before, is the spirit of unarmed resistance before which the bayonet runs to rust and gun-powder turns to dust."

—*Young India*: Dec. 19, 1929.

The Best Education

Thus viewed, Passive Resistance is the noblest and the best education. It should come, not after the ordinary education in letters of children, but it should precede it. It will not be denied that a child, before it begins to write its alphabet and to gain worldly knowledge, should know what the soul is, what Truth is, what love is, what powers are latent in the soul. It should be an essential of real education that a child should learn that, in the struggle of life, it can easily conquer hate by love, untruth by truth, violence by self-suffering.

—*Indian Opinion* (Golden Number): 1914.

5. SOUL FORCE Vs. FORCE OF ARMS

THE English expression 'Passive Resistance' hardly denotes the force about which I propose to write. But '*Satyagraha*' i.e. Truth-force correctly conveys the meaning. Truth-force is soul-force and is the opposite of the force of arms. The former is a purely religious instrument; its conscious use is, therefore, possible only in men religiously inclined. Prahlad, Mirabai and others were passive resisters (in the sense in which the expression is here used).

At the time of the Moroccan War, the French guns were playing upon the Arabs of Morocco. The latter believed that they were fighting for their religion. They defied death and with *Allah* on their lips rushed into the cannon's mouth. There was no room left here for them to deal death. The French gunners declined

to work their guns against these Arabs. They threw up their hats in the air, rushed forward and with shouts of cheer embraced these Arabs. This is an illustration of Passive Resistance and its victory. The Arabs were not consciously passive resisters. They prepared to face death in a fit of frenzy. The spirit of love was absent in them.

Refusal to Surrender

A passive resister has no spirit of envy in him. It is not anger that bids him court death. But it is by reason of his ability to suffer that he refuses to surrender to the so-called enemy or the tyrant. Thus, a passive resister has need to have courage, forgiveness and love. Imam Hussain and his little band refused to yield to what to them appeared to be an unjust order. They knew at the time that death alone would be their lot. If they yielded to it, they felt that their manhood and their religion would be in jeopardy. They, therefore, welcomed the embrace of death. Imam Hussain preferred the slaughter in his arms of his son and nephew, for him and them to suffer from thirst rather than submit to what to him appeared to be an unjust order. It is my belief that the rise of Islam has been due not to the sword, but to the self-immolation alone of the *Fakirs* of Islam. There is little to boast of in the ability to wield the sword. When the striker finds out his mistake, he understands the sinfulness of his act which now becomes murder and has to repent of his folly. Whereas he who courts death, even though

he might have done so in error, for him it is still a victory.

The Religion of Ahimsa

Passive Resistance is the religion of *Ahimsa*. It is, therefore, everywhere and always a duty and is desirable. Violence is *Himsa* and has been discarded in all religions. Even the devotees of methods of violence impose elaborate restrictions upon their use. Passive Resistance admits of no such limits. It is limited only by the insufficiency of the passive resister's strength to suffer.

No one else but a passive resister can answer the question whether his Passive Resistance is lawful or otherwise. The public can only judge after the passive resister has begun his work. He cannot be deterred by public displeasure. His operations are not founded upon arithmetical formulæ. He may be considered a clever politician or a thoughtful man who commences his so-called Passive Resistance only after having weighed chances of success and failure. But he is by no means a passive resister. The former acts because he must.

Forces of Good and Evil

Both soul force and force of arms are from times immemorial. Both have received their due meed of praise in the accepted religious literature. They respectively represent forces of good and evil. The Indian belief is that there was in this land a time when the

forces of good were predominant. That state still remains our ideal. Europe furnishes a forceful illustration of predominance of the forces of evil.

Characteristics of A True Passive Resister

Either of these is preferable to rank cowardice.... If we do not give Passive Resistance due predominance, methods of violence will automatically gain strength. They are like weeds; they grow anywhere in any soil. For a cultivation of Passive Resistance, endeavour and courage form the necessary manure; and as weeds, if they are not rooted out, overwhelm a crop, even so will violence grow like weeds if the ground is not kept clean by self-sacrifice for the growth of Passive Resistance, and violence that may have already taken root be not dealt with by loving hands.... Therefore, the sooner the spirit of Passive Resistance pervades the atmosphere, the better it is.... A passive resister never wants to embarrass the Government or anybody else. He does not act thoughtlessly; he is never insolent.... Fearing God alone, he is afraid of no other power. Fear of kings can never make him forsake the path of duty.

—*Speeches & Writings of M. Gandhi*: P. 192.

6. SATYAGRAHA AND PASSIVE RESISTANCE

SATYAGRAHA is soul-force pure and simple, and whenever and to whatever extent there is room for the use of arms or physical force or brute force, there

and to that extent is there so much less possibility for soul-force. These are purely antagonistic forces in my view, and I had full realization of this antagonism even at the time of the advent of *Satyagraha.*

A Fundamental Difference

We will not stop here to consider whether these views are right or wrong. We are only concerned to note the distinction between Passive Resistance and *Satyagraha*, and we have seen that there is a great and fundamental difference between the two. If without understanding this, those who call themselves either passive resisters or *Satyagrahis* believe both to be one and the same thing, there would be injustice to both leading to untoward consequences. The result of our using the phrase 'Passive Resistance' in South Africa was, not that people admired us by ascribing to us the bravery and the self-sacrifice of the Suffragists, but we were mistaken to be a danger to person and property which the Suffragists were, and even a generous friend like Mr. Hosken imagined us to be weak.

The Power of Suggestion

The power of suggestion is such, that a man at last becomes what he believes himself to be. If we continue to believe ourselves and let others believe, that we are weak and helpless and, therefore, offer Passive Resistance, our resistance would never make us strong, and at the earliest opportunity we would give up Passive Resistance as a weapon of the weak. On

the other hand, if we are *Satyagrahis* and offer *Satyagraha* believing ourselves to be strong, two clear consequences result from it. Fostering the idea of strength, we grow stronger and stronger every day. With the increase in our strength, our *Satyagraha,* too, becomes more effective and we would never be casting about for an opportunity to give it up.

No Scope for Love in Passive Resistance

Again, while there is no scope for love in Passive Resistance, on the other hand, not only has hatred no place in *Satyagraha* but is a positive breach of its ruling principle. While in Passive Resistance there is a scope for the use of arms when a suitable occasion arrives, in *Satyagraha* physical force is forbidden even in the most favourable circumstances. Passive Resistance is often looked upon as a preparation for use of force, while *Satyagraha* can never be utilized as such. Passive Resistance may be offered side by side with the use of arms. *Satyagraha* and brute force, being each a negation of the other, can never go together. *Satyagraha* may be offered to one's nearest and dearest; Passive Resistance can never be offered to them unless of course they have ceased to be dear and become an object of hatred to us. In Passive Resistance, there is always present an idea of harassing the other party and there is a simultaneous readiness to undergo any hardships entailed upon us by such activity; while in *Satyagraha* there is not the remotest idea of injuring the opponent. *Satyagraha* postulates the conquest of the adversary by suffering in one's own person.

Characteristics of Passive Resistance

These are the distinctions between the two forces. But I do not wish to suggest that the merits, or if you like, the defects of Passive Resistance thus enumerated are to be seen in every movement which passes by that name. But it can be shown that these defects have been noticed in many cases of Passive Resistance. Jesus Christ indeed has been acclaimed as the Prince of Passive Resisters, but I submit in that case Passive Resistance must mean *Satyagraha* and *Satyagraha* alone. There are not many cases in history of Passive Resistance in that sense. One of these is that of the Doukhobors of Russia cited by Tolstoy. The phrase 'Passive Resistance' was not employed to note the patient suffering of oppression by thousands of devout Christians in the early days of Christianity. I would, therefore, class them as *Satyagrahis*. And, if their conduct be described as Passive Resistance, Passive Resistance becomes synonymous with *Satyagraha*. It has been my object.... to show that *Satyagraha* is essentially different from what people generally mean in English by the phrase 'Passive Resistance'.

A Note of Warning

While enumerating the characteristics of Passive Resistance, I had to sound a note of warning, in order to avoid injustice being done to those who had recourse to it. It is also necessary to point out that I do not claim for people calling themselves *Satyagrahis* all the merits which I have described as being characteristic of

Satyagraha. I am not unaware of the fact that many a *Satyagrahi* so-called is an utter stranger to them. Many suppose *Satyagraha* to be a weapon of the weak. Others have said that it is a preparation for armed resistance. But I must repeat once more that it has not been my object to describe *Satyagrahis* as they are, but to set forth the implications of *Satyagraha* and the characteristics of *Satyagrahis* as they ought to be.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: P. 113.

7. CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE

Q. What is the distinction between the Christian doctrine of non-resistance and your resistance without violence? Have you taken your principle from Tolstoy?

A. It has often been said that I owe my principle of non-violent resistance to Tolstoy. It is not the whole truth. I derived the greatest benefit from his writings, but, as Tolstoy himself admitted, I cultivated and developed and elaborated the method in South Africa, so much so, that it looked quite different from the non-resistance that Tolstoy had written about and recommended. This I say in no derogation of Tolstoy. He is no apt pupil who will not build upon the foundations laid by his teacher for him. He only deserves a good teacher who would add to the legacy that the teacher has left him. I should be an unworthy son to my father if I should not add to my inheritance, and so I have always regarded it as a matter of pride that, thanks be to God, what I have learnt from Tolstoy

has fructified a hundred-fold. Tolstoy talked of Passive Resistance largely, but the non-violent resistance elaborated in the Transvaal is a force definitely more active than the resistance that an armed man can devise, and I am glad to recall the fact that, in a long letter he wrote to me unsolicited, he said that his eyes were fixed upon me and my experiment wherever I was. If you study the movement in India and South Africa, you will find how this thing is capable of infinite expansion.

Weapon of The Strongest

Q. Is not non-resistance submission to the strong?

A. Passive Resistance is regarded as the weapon of the weak, but the resistance, for which I have to coin a new name altogether, is the weapon of the strongest. I had to coin a new word to signify what I meant. But its matchless beauty lies in the fact that, though it is the weapon of the strongest, it can be wielded by the weak in body, by the aged and even by the children if they have stout hearts.... The underlying idea is that women, children and others have the same soul, same potentiality. The question is one of drawing out the limitless power of Truth.

—*India's Case for Swaraj*: P. 399.

8. NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE

PASSIVE Resistance is a misnomer for non-violent resistance. It is much more active than violent resistance. It is direct, ceaseless, but three-fourths invisible and only one-fourth visible. In its visibility it seems to be ineffective, *e.g.*, the spinning wheel which I have

called the symbol of non-violence. In its visibility it appears ineffective, but it is really intensely active and most effective in ultimate result.

An Intensely Active Force

Non-violence is an intensely active force when properly understood and used. A violent man's activity is most visible, while it lasts. But it is always transitory. What can be more visible than the Abyssinians done to death by Italians? There it was lesser violence pitted against much greater. But if the Abyssinians had retired from the field and allowed themselves to be slaughtered, their seeming inactivity would have been much more effective though not for the moment visible. Hitler and Mussolini on the one hand, and Stalin on the other, are able to show the immediate effectiveness of violence. But it will be as transitory as that of Chenghi's slaughter. But the effects of Buddha's non-violent action persist and are likely to grow with age. And the more it is practised, the more effective and inexhaustible it becomes, and ultimately the whole world stands agape and exclaims: 'a miracle has happened!' All miracles are due to the silent and effective working of invisible forces. Non-violence is the most invisible and the most effective.

—*Harijan*: March 20, 1937.

9. THE LAW OF SATYAGRAHA

FOR me the Law of Satyagraha—the Law of Love—is an eternal principle. For the past thirty years, I have been preaching and practising *Satyagraha*. The

principles of *Satyagraha*, as I know it today, constitute a gradual evolution.

The term '*Satyagraha*' was coined by me in South Africa to express the force that the Indians there used for full eight years, and it was coined in order to distinguish it from the movement then going on in the United Kingdom and South Africa under the name of Passive Resistance.[1]

Differs from Passive Resistance

Satyagraha differs from Passive Resistance as the North Pole from the South. The latter has been conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude

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1. "None of us knew what name to give to our movement. I then used the term '*Passive Resistance*' in describing it. I did not quite understand the implications of '*Passive Resistance*' as I called it. I only knew that some new principle had come into being. As the struggle advanced, the phrase '*Passive Resistance*' gave rise to confusion and it appeared shameful to permit this great struggle to be known only by an English name. Again, that foreign phrase could hardly pass as current coin among the community. A small prize was, therefore, announced in *Indian Opinion* to be awarded to the reader who invented the best designation for our struggle.... Shri Maganlal Gandhi was one of the competitors and he suggested the word '*Sadagraha*', meaning 'firmness in a good cause.' I liked the word, but it did not fully represent the whole idea I wished it to connote. I, therefore, corrected it to '*Satyagraha*'. Truth (*Satya*) implies love, and firmness (*agraha*) engenders and, therefore, serves as synonym for force. I thus began to call the Indian movement '*Satyagraha*', that is to say, the Force which is born of Truth and Love or Non-violence, and gave up the use of the phrase '*Passive Resistance*,' in connection with it, so much so that even in English writing we often avoided it and used instead the word '*Satyagraha*' itself or some other equivalent English phrase. This, then, was the genesis of the movement which came to be known as *Satyagraha*, and of the word used as a designation for it."

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: P. 109.

the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end; whereas the former has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form.

Root Meaning

Its root meaning is holding on to Truth; hence Truth-force. I have also called it Love-force or Soul-force. In the application of *Satyagraha*, I discovered in the earliest stages that pursuit of Truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent, but that he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. For, what appears to be Truth to the one may appear to be error to the other. And patience means self-suffering. So, the doctrine came to mean vindication of Truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but on one's own self.

Historical Examples of Satyagrahis

When Daniel disregarded the laws of the Medes and Persians which offended his conscience and meekly suffered the punishment for his disobedience, he offered *Satyagraha* in its purest form. Socrates would not refrain from preaching what he knew to be the Truth to the Athenian youth, and bravely suffered the punishment of death. He was, in this case, a *Satyagrahi*. Prahlad disregarded the orders of his father because he considered them to be repugnant to his conscience. He uncomplainingly and cheerfully bore the tortures to which he was subjected at the instance of his father.

Mirabai, who is said to have offended her husband by following her own conscience, was content to live in separation from him and bore with quiet dignity and resignation all the injuries that are said to have been done to her in order to bend her to her husband's will. Both Prahlad and Mirabai practised *Satyagraha*. It must be remembered that neither Daniel nor Socrates, neither Prahlad nor Mirabai had any ill-will towards their persecutors. Daniel and Socrates are regarded as having been model citizens of the States to which they belonged; Prahlad a model son, Mirabai a model wife.

Not a New Doctrine

This doctrine of *Satyagraha* is not new; it is merely an extension of the rule of domestic life to the political. Family disputes and differences are generally settled according to the Law of Love. The injured member has so much regard for the others that he suffers injury for the sake of his principles without retaliating and without being angry with those who differ from him. And as repression of anger, self-suffering are difficult processes, he does not dignify trifles into principles; but, in all non-essentials, readily agrees with the rest of the family and thus contrives to gain the maximum of peace for himself without disturbing that of others. Thus, his action, whether he resists or resigns, is always calculated to promote the common welfare of the family. It is this Law of Love which, silently but surely, governs the family for the most part throughout the civilized world.

I feel that nations cannot be one in reality, nor can their activities be conducive to the common good of the whole humanity, unless there is this definition and acceptance of the law of the family in national and international affairs, in other words, on the political platform. Nations can be called civilized only to the extent that they obey this law.

The Law of Love

This Law of Love is nothing but a Law of Truth. Without Truth, there is no Love; without Truth, it may be affection, as for one's country to the injury of others; or infatuation, as of a young man for a girl; or love may be unreasoning and blind, as of ignorant parents for their children. Love transcends all animality and is never partial. *Satyagraha* has, therefore, been described as a coin on whose face you read Love, and on the reverse you read Truth. It is a coin current everywhere and has indefinable value.

Satyagrahi Knows No Defeat

Satyagraha is self-dependent. It does not require the assent of the opponent before it can be brought into play. Indeed, it shines out most when the opponent resists. It is, therefore, irresistible. A *Satyagrahi* does not know what defeat is, for he fights for Truth without being exhausted. Death in the fight is a deliverance, and prison a gate-way to liberty.

Twice Blessed

It is called also soul-force, because a definite recognition of the soul within is a necessity, if a *Satya-*

grahi is to believe that death does not mean cessation of struggle, but a culmination. The body is merely a vehicle for self-expression; and he gladly gives up the body when its existence is an obstruction in the way of the opponent seeing the Truth for which the *Satyagrahi* stands. He gives up the body in the certain faith that if anything would change his opponent's view, a willing sacrifice of his body must do so. And with the knowledge that the soul survives the body, he is not impatient to see the triumph of Truth in the present body. Indeed, victory lies in the ability to die in the attempt to make the opponent see the Truth, which the *Satyagrahi* for the time being expresses.

And as a *Satyagrahi* never injures his opponent and always appeals, either to his reason by gentle argument or to his heart by the sacrifice of self, *Satyagraha* is twice blessed; it blesses him who practises it, and him against whom it is practised.

Not Difficult to Practise

It has, however, been objected that *Satyagraha*, as we conceive it, can be practised only by a select few. My experience proves the contrary. Once its simple principles—adherence to Truth and insistence upon it by self-suffering—are understood, anybody can practise it. It is as difficult or as easy to practise as any other virtue. It is as little necessary for its practice that everyone should understand the whole philosophy of it, as it is for the practice of total abstinence.

No Compromise with Error

After all, no one disputes the necessity of insisting on Truth as one sees it. And it is easy enough to understand that it is vulgar to attempt to compel the opponent to its acceptance by using brute force; it is discreditable to submit to error because argument has failed to convince, and that the only true and honourable course is not to submit to it even at the cost of one's life. Then only can the world be purged of error, if it ever can be altogether. There can be no compromise with error where it hurts the vital being.

Its Action on The Political Field

But, on the political field the struggle on behalf of the people mostly consists in opposing error in the shape of unjust laws. When you have failed to bring the error home to the law-giver by way of petitions and the like, the only remedy open to you, if you do not wish to submit to it, is to compel him to retrace his steps by suffering in your own person, *i.e.*, by inviting the penalty for the breach of the law. Hence, *Satyagraha* largely appears to the public as Civil Disobedience or Civil Resistance. It is civil in the sense that it is not criminal.

Beauty and Efficacy of Satyagraha

The criminal, *i.e.*, the ordinary law-breaker breaks the law surreptitiously and tries to avoid the penalty; not so the civil resister. He ever obeys the laws of the State to which he belongs, not out of fear of the sanc-

tions, but because he considers them to be good for the welfare of society. But there come occasions, generally rare, when he considers certain laws to be so unjust as to render obedience to them a dishonour, he then openly and civilly breaks them and quietly suffers the penalty for their breach. And in order to register his protest against the action of the law-giver, it is open to him to withdraw his co-operation from the State by disobeying such other laws whose breach does not involve moral turpitude. In my opinion, the beauty and efficacy of *Satyagraha* are so great, and the doctrine so simple, that it can be preached even to children.

—*Young India*: Nov. 5, 1919.

10. SATYAGRAHA DOCTRINE

Q. With regard to your *Satyagraha* doctrine, so far as I understand it, it involves the pursuit of Truth and in that pursuit you invite suffering on yourself and do not cause violence to anybody else.

A. Yes.

Q. However honestly a man may strive in his search for Truth, his notions of Truth may be different from the notions of others. Who, then, is to determine the Truth?

A. The individual himself would determine that.

Q. Different individuals would have different views as to Truth. Would that not lead to confusion?

A. I do not think so.

Q. Honestly striving after Truth is different in every case.

A. That is why the non-violence part was a necessary corollary. Without that, there would be confusion and worse.

Q. Must not the person wanting to pursue Truth be of high moral and intellectual equipment?

A. No. It would be impossible to expect that from every one. If A has evolved a truth by his own efforts which B, C and others are to accept, I should not require them to have the equipment of A.

Q. Then, it comes to this, that a man comes to a decision and others of lower intellectual and moral equipment would have to blindly follow him.

A. Not blindly. All I wish to urge is that each individual, unless he wants to carry on his pursuit of Truth independently, needs to follow someone who has determined Truth.

Q. Your scheme involves the determination of Truth by people of high moral and intellectual equipment and a large number of people may follow them blindly, being themselves unable to arrive at similar conclusions by reason of their lower intellectual equipment.

A. I would exact from them nothing more than I would expect from an ordinary being.

Q. I take it that the strength of the propaganda must depend on the number of its followers.

A. No. In *Satyagraha*, success is possible even if there is only one *Satyagrahi* of the proper stamp.

—*Young India*: Feb. 4, 1920.

11. DOCTRINE OF SATYAGRAHA IN NUTSHELL

SOULS without number spent themselves in the past, are spending themselves in the present, and will spend themselves in the future in the service of country and humanity, and that is in the fitness of things as no one knows who is pure. But *Satyagrahis* may rest assured, that even if there is only one among them who is pure as crystal, his sacrifice suffices to achieve the end in view. The world rests upon the bedrock of *Satya* or *Truth*. *Asatya* meaning untruth also means non-existence, and *Satya* or Truth also means that which *Is*. If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory is out of the question. And Truth being that which *Is* can never be destroyed. This is the doctrine of *Satyagraha* in a nutshell.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: P. 285.

12. SATYAGRAHA AND ITS OFF-SHOOTS

SATYAGRAHA is literally holding on to Truth and it means, therefore, Truth-force. Truth is soul or spirit. It is, therefore, known as soul-force. It excludes the use of violence because man is not capable of knowing the absolute Truth and, therefore, not competent to punish. The word was coined in South Africa to distinguish the non-violent resistance of the Indians of South Africa from the contemporary 'Passive Resistance' of the Suffragettes and others. It is not conceived as a weapon of the weak.

Passive Resistance

Passive Resistance is used in the orthodox English sense and covers the Suffragette movement as well as the resistance of the Non-conformists. Passive Resistance has been conceived and is regarded as a weapon of the weak. Whilst it avoids violence, being not open to the weak, it does not exclude its use if, in the opinion of a passive resister, the occasion demands it. However, it has always been distinguished from armed resistance and its application was at one time confined to Christian martyrs.

Civil Disobedience

Civil Disobedience is civil breach of unmoral statutory enactments. The expression was, so far as I am aware, coined by Thoreau to signify his own resistance to the laws of a slave State. He has left a masterly treatise on the duty of Civil Disobedience. But Thoreau was not perhaps an out and out champion of non-violence. Probably, also, Thoreau limited his breach of statutory laws to the revenue law, *i.e.* payment of taxes. Whereas the term Civil Disobedience, as practised in 1919, covered a breach of any statutory and unmoral law. It signified the resister's outlawry in a civil *i.e.*, non-violent manner. He invoked the sanctions of the law and cheerfully suffered imprisonment. It is a branch of *Satyagraha*.

Non-Co-operation

Non-co-operation predominantly implies withdrawing of co-operation from the State that in the non-

co-operator's view has become corrupt and excludes Civil Disobedience of the fierce type described above. By its very nature, Non-co-operation is even open to children of understanding and can be safely practised by the masses. Civil Disobedience presupposes the habit of willing obedience to laws without fear of their sanctions. It can, therefore, be practised only as a last resort and by a select few, in the first instance at any rate. Non-co-operation, too, like Civil Disobedience is a branch of *Satyagraha*, which includes all non-violent resistance for the vindication of Truth.

—*Young India*: March 23, 1921.

Branches of The Same Tree

Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience are but different branches of the same tree called *Satyagraha*. It is my *Kalpadruma*[1]—my *Jam-i-Jam*—the Universal Provider. *Satyagraha* is search for Truth; and God is Truth. *Ahimsa* or non-violence is the light that reveals that Truth to me. *Swaraj* for me is part of that Truth. This *Satyagraha* did not fail me in South Africa, Kheda, or Champaran and in a host of other cases I could mention. It excludes all violence or hate. . . . I have repeatedly stated that *Satyagraha* never fails and that one perfect *Satyagrahi* is enough to vindicate Truth. Let us all strive to be perfect *Satyagrahis*. The striving does not require any quality unattainable by the lowliest among us. For, *Satyagraha* is an attribute of the spirit

1. A tree supposed to grant all desires.—Ed.

—*Young India*.

within. It is latent in every one of us. Like *Swaraj*, it is our birthright. Let us know it.

—*Young India*: Dec. 26, 1924.

13. A POWERFUL INSTRUMENT

I CONSIDER Non-co-operation to be such a powerful and pure instrument,[1] that if it is enforced in an earnest spirit, it will be like seeking first the Kingdom of God and everything else following as a matter of course. People will have then realized their true power. They would have learnt the value of discipline, self-control, joint action, non-violence, organization and everything else that goes to make a nation great and good, and not merely great.

I believe that the use of a pure weapon, even from a mistaken motive, does not fail to produce some good, even as the telling of truth, if only because for the time being it is the best policy, is at least so much to the good.

—*Young India*: June 2, 1920.

14. DOCTRINE OF THE SWORD

NON-VIOLENCE is the Law of our Species, as violence is the Law of the Brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of

1. "There is no instrument so clean, so harmless and yet so effective as Non-co-operation. Judiciously handled, it need not produce any evil consequences. And its intensity will depend on the capacity of people for sacrifice."

—*Young India*: June 30, 1920.

physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.

I have, therefore, venturned to place before India the ancient Law of Self-sacrifice. For, *Satyagraha* and its off-shoots, Non-co-operation and Civil Resistance, are nothing but new names for the Law of Suffering. The *Rishis*, who discovered the Law of Non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence.

Non-violence, in its dynamic condition, means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this Law of our Being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire, to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration.

—*Young India*: Aug. 11, 1920.

15. DIRECT ACTION

NEVER has anything been done on this earth without direct action. I rejected the word Passive Resistance because of its insufficiency and its being interpreted as a weapon of the weak. It was direct action in South Africa which told and told so effectively that it

converted General Smuts to sanity. He was in 1906 the most relentless opponent of Indian aspirations. In 1914, he took pride in doing tardy justice by removing from the Statute Book of the Union a disgraceful measure which, in 1909 he had told Lord Morley, would never be removed, for he then said South Africa would never tolerate repeal of a measure which was twice passed by the Transvaal Legislature. But, what is more, direct action sustained for eight years left behind it not only no bitterness, but the very Indians who put up such a stubborn fight against General Smuts ranged themselves round his banner in 1915 and fought under him in East Africa. It was direct action in Champaran which removed an age-long grievance. A meek submission, when one is chafing under a disability or a grievance which one would gladly see removed, not only does not make for unity, but makes the weak party acid, angry and prepares him for an opportunity to explode. By allying myself with the weak party, by teaching him direct, firm, but harmless action, I make him feel strong and capable of defying the physical might. He feels braced for the struggle, regains confidence in himself and knowing that the remedy lies with himself, ceases to harbour the spirit of revenge and learns to be satisfied with a redress of the wrong he is seeking to remedy.

Examples of Buddha and Christ

Buddha fearlessly carried the war into the enemy's camp and brought down on its knees an arrogant priesthood. Christ drove out the money-changers from the temple of Jerusalem, and drew down curses from

Heaven upon the hypocrites and the Pharisees.[1] Both were for intensely direct action. But, even as Buddha and Christ chastized, they showed unmistakable gentleness and love behind every act of theirs. They would not raise a finger against their enemies, but would gladly surrender themselves rather than the Truth for which they lived. Buddha would have died resisting the priesthood, if the majesty of his life had not proved to be equal to the task of bending the priesthood. Christ died on the Cross with a crown of thorns on his head, defying the might of a whole empire. And if I raise resistances of a non-violent character, I simply and humbly follow in the footsteps of the great teacher.

—*Young India*: May 12, 1920.

16. NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

I ACCEPT the interpretation of *Ahimsa*, namely, that it is not merely a negative state of harmlessness but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. But it does not mean helping the evil-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence. On the contrary, love, the active state of

1. "Jesus did not hesitate to draw down Divine wrath upon those whom he called 'a generation of vipers, hypocrites, whited sepulchres'. Buddha did not spare those who killed the innocent goats in the name of religion. Nor are the *Quran* or the *Zend Avesta* free from such use. Only all these seers and prophets had no evil intention in them. They had to describe persons and things as they were and resort to language so as to enable us to make our choice between good and evil."

—*Young India*: Nov. 17, 1921.

Ahimsa, requires you to resist the wrong-doer by dissociating yourself from him even though it may offend him or injure him physically. Thus, if my son lives a life of shame, I may not help him to do so by continuing to support him; on the contrary, my love for him requires me to withdraw all support from him although it may mean even his death. And the same love imposes on me the obligation of welcoming him to my bosom when he repents. But I may not by physical force compel my son to become good. That, in my opinion, is the moral of the story of the Prodigal Son.

Non-co-operation is not a passive state, it is an intensely active state—more active than physical resistance or violence. Passive resistance is a misnomer. Non-co-operation, in the sense used by me, must be non-violent and, therefore, neither punitive nor vindictive nor based on malice, ill-will or hatred.

—*Young India*: Aug. 25, 1920.

17. NOT A WAY OF VIOLENCE

MY Non-co-operation, I hold, is not only not a way of violence, but may be an act of love, if love is the motive that has prompted my refusal. The fact is that all Non-co-operation is not violent, and Non-violent Non-co-operation can never be an act of violence. It may not be always an act of love. For, love is an active quality which cannot always be inferred from the act itself. A surgeon may perform a most success-

ful operation, and yet he may have no love for his patient.

Non-co-operation is not violence when the refusal of the restraint is a right and a duty, even though by reason of its performance some people may have to suffer. It will be an act of love when Non-co-operation is resorted to solely for the good of the wrong-doer.

—*Young India*: April 10, 1924.

18. NEED OF HUMILITY IN NON-CO-OPERATION

THE spirit of non-violence necessarily leads to humility. Non-violence means reliance on God, the Rock of Ages. If we would seek His aid, we must approach Him with a humble and a contrite heart.... We must act, even as the mango tree which droops as it bears fruit. Its grandeur lies in its majestic lowliness.

A Non-co-operationist strives to compel attention and to set an example not by his violence, but by his unobstrusive humility. He allows his solid action to speak for his creed. His strength lies in his reliance upon the correctness of his position. And the conviction of it grows most in his opponent, when he least interposes his speech between his action and his opponent. Speech, especially when it is haughty, betrays want of confidence and it makes one's opponent sceptical about the reality of the act itself. Humility, therefore, is the key to quick success.

—*Young India*: Jan. 12, 1921.

19. LESSONS IN NON-CO-OPERATION

WHAT does a son do when he objects to some action of his father? He requests the father to desist from the objectionable course, *i.e.* presents respectful petitions. If the father does not agree in spite of repeated prayers, he non-co-operates with him to the extent even of leaving the paternal roof. This is pure justice. Where father and son are uncivilized, they quarrel, abuse each other and often even come to blows. An obedient son is ever modest, ever peaceful and ever loving. It is only his love which on due occasion compels him to non-co-operate. The father himself understands this loving non-co-operation. He cannot endure abandonment by or separation from the son, is distressed at heart and repents. Not that it always happens thus. But the son's duty of non-co-operation is clear.

The First Lesson

Such non-co-operation is possible between a prince and his people. In particular circumstances, it may be the people's duty. Such circumstances can exist only where the latter are by nature fearless and are lovers of liberty. They generally appreciate the laws of the State and obey them voluntarily without the fear of punishment. Reasoned and willing obedience to the laws of the State is the first lesson in Non-co-operation.

The Second Lesson

The second is that of tolerance. We must tolerate many laws of he State, even when they are inconvenient. A son may not approve of some orders of the father

and yet he obeys them. It is only when they are unworthy of tolerance and immoral, that he disobeys them. The father will at once understand such respectful disobedience. In the same way, it is only when a people have proved their active loyalty by obeying the many laws of the State that they acquire the right of Civil Disobedience.[1]

The Third Lesson

The third lesson is that of suffering. He who has not the capacity of suffering cannot non-co-operate. He who has not learnt to sacrifice his property, and even his family when necessary, can never non-co-operate. It is possible that a prince enraged by non-co-operation will infiict all manner of punishments. There lies the test of love, patience, and strength. He who is not ready to undergo the fiery ordeal, cannot non-co-operate. A whole people cannot be considered fit or ready for non-co-operation, when only an individual or two have mastered these three lessons. A large number of the people must be thus prepared before they can non-co-operate. The result of hasty non-co-operation can only lead to harm. Previous preparation is needed for non-co-operation, as it is for all important things. A man cannot

1. "The right to Civil Disobedience accrues only to those who know and practise the duty of voluntary obedience to laws, whether made by them or others. Obedience should come not from fear of the consequences of the breach, but because it is the duty to obey with all our heart and not merely mechanically. Without the fulfilment of this preliminary condition, Civil Disobedience is civil only in name and never of the strong but of the weak. It is not charged with goodwill, *i.e.*, non-violence."

—*A Pilgrimage for Peace*: P. 126.

become a non-co-operator by merely wishing to be one. Discipline is obligatory.

—*Young India*: Jan. 8, 1925.

20. USE AND ABUSE OF NON-CO-OPERATION

I HOLD that Non-co-operation is of universal use. Well applied, its use in politics can wholly displace the use of barbarous weapons of mutural destruction. The thing to do, therefore, is not to restrict its use, but to extend it, care being taken that it is used in accordance with the known laws regulating its use. Risk of misuse has undoubtedly to be run.[1] But with the increase in the knowledge of its right use, the risk can be minimized.

One safe thing about Non-co-operation is that, in the end, its abuse recoils more upon the users than upon those against whom it is used. Its abuse is the greatest in domestic relations, because those against whom it is used are not strong enough to resist the abuse. It becomes a case of misapplied affection. Doting parents or wives are the greatest victims. These will learn wisdom when they realize that affection does not demand yielding to extortion in any form. On the contrary, true affection will resist it.

—*Harijan*: Aug. 18, 1940.

1. "No big or swift movement can be carried on without bold risks and life will not be worth living if it is not attended with large risks. Does not the history of the world show that there would have been no romance in life if there had been no risks?"

—*Young India*: Dec. 15, 1921.

21. CIVIL BREACH OF LAWS

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE must not be carried beyond the point of breaking the unmoral laws of the country. Breach of the laws to be civil assumes the strictest and willing obedience to gaol discipline, because disobedience of a particular rule assumes a willing acceptance of the sanction provided for its breach. And immediately a person quarrels both with the rule and the sanction for its breach, he ceases to be civil and lends himself to the precipitation of chaos and anarchy. A civil resister is, if one may be permitted such a claim for him, a philanthropist and a friend of the State. An anarchist is an enemy of the State and is, therefore, a misanthrope.... But I hold the opinion firmly that Civil Disobedience is the purest type of constitutional agitation. Of course, it becomes degrading and despicable if its civil, *i.e.*, non-violent character is a mere camouflage. If the honesty of non-violence be admitted, there is no warrant for condemnation even of the fiercest disobedience because of the likelihood of its leading to violence.

—*Young India*: Dec. 15, 1921.

22. NECESSITY OF OBSERVING JAIL DISCIPLINE

NON-CO-OPERATION, when its limitations are not recognized, becomes a licence instead of being a duty and, therfore, becomes a crime. The dividing line between right and wrong is often so thin as to become

indistinguishable. But it is a line that is breakable and unmistakable.

What is, then, the difference between those who find themselves in jails for being in the right, and those who are there for being in the wrong? Both wear often the same dress, eat the same food and are subject outwardly to the same discipline. But while the latter submit to discipline most unwillingly and would commit a breach of it secretly, and even openly if they could, the former will willingly and to the best of their ability conform to jail discipline and prove worthier and more serviceable to their cause than when they are outside.

Indeed, whilst on the one hand Civil Disobedience authorizes disobedience of unjust laws or unmoral laws of a State which one seeks to overthrow, it requires meek and willing submission to the penalty of disobedience and, therefore, cheerful acceptance of jail discipline and its attendant hardships.

It is now, therefore, clear that civil resister's resistance ceases and his obedience is resumed as soon as he is under confinement. In confinement, he claims no privileges because of the civility of his disobedience. Inside the jail, by his exemplary conduct he reforms even the criminals surrounding him, he softens the hearts of jailors and others in authority. Such meek behaviour springing from strength and knowledge ultimately dissolves the tyranny of the tyrant. It is for this reason that I claim that voluntary suffering is the quick-

est and the best remedy for the removal of abuses and injustices.

—*Young India*: Dec. 29, 1921.

23. SPECIALITY OF NON-VIOLENCE

A CIVIL RESISTER does not go to jail to embarrass the jail authorities by indulging in the breach of jail rules. Of course, there can be Civil Disobedience in jail, too. But there are definite rules for it. The point is that the civil resister's fight does not end with his imprisonment. Once we are inside the prison, we become civilly dead so far as the outside world is concerned. But inside the prison our fight to convert the hearts of the Government's bond slaves, *i.e.*, the jail officials, just begins. It gives us a chance of demonstrating to them that we are not like thieves or dacoits, that we wish them no ill, nor do we want to destroy the opponent but want only to make him our friend, not by servilely obeying all orders, just or unjust—that is not the way to win true friendship—but by showing them that there is no evil in us, that we sincerely wish them well and in our hearts pray that God's goodness may be upon them.

It is a speciality of non-violence that its action never stops. That cannot be said of the sword or the bullet. The bullet can destroy the enemy; non-violence converts the enemy into a friend and thus enables the civil resister to assimilate to himself the latter's strength.

—*A Pilgrimage for Peace*: P. 88.

24. VITAL PART OF NON-CO-OPERATION

NON-VIOLENCE is the most vital and integral part of Non-co-operation. We may fail in everything else, and still continue our battle if we remained non-violent. But we capitulate miserably, if we fail in adhering to non-violence. ....Any violence on our part must be a token of our stupidity, ignorance and impotent rage. To exercise restraint under the gravest provocation is the truest mark of soldiership. The veriest tyro in the art of war knows that he must avoid the ambushes of his adversary. And every provocation is a dangerous ambush into which we must resolutely refuse to walk.[1]

—*Young India*: July 28, 191.

25. NEED OF COURAGE AND DISCIPLINE

NON-VIOLENCE laughs at the might of the tyrant and stultifies him by non-retaliation and non-retrial. ....The might of the tyrant recoils upon himself when it meets with no response, even as an arm violently waved in the air suffers dislocation.

And just as we need the cool courage described above, we need perfect discipline and training in voluntary obedience to be able to offer Civil Disobedience. Civil Disobedience is the active expression of

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1. "Victory is impossible until we are able to keep our temper under the gravest provocation. Calmness under fire is a soldier's indispensable quality. A non-co-operator is nothing if he cannot remain calm and unperturbed under a fierce fire of provocation."

—*Young India*: Aug. 25, 1921.

non-violence. Civil Disobedience distinguishes the non-violence of the strong from the passive, *i.e.*, negative non-violence of the weak.

Rules voluntarily passed by us, and rules which carry no sanction save the disapproval of our own conscience, must be like debts of honour held far more binding than rules superimposed upon us or rules whose breach we can purge by paying the penalty thereof. It follows that, if we have not learnt the discipline of obeying our own rules, in other words, carrying out our own promises, we are ill adapted for disobedience that can be at all described as civil.

—*Young India*: Oct. 20, 1921.

26. VOLUNTARY OBEDIENCE

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.... presupposes a scrupulous and willing observance of all laws which do not hurt the moral sense. Obedience to laws of voluntary associations.... is only the first step to voluntary and ungrudging obedience to the laws imposed by the State. Thoughtless disobedience means disruption of society. The first thing, therefore, for those who aspire after Civil Disobedience is to learn the art of willingly obeying laws of voluntary associations, such as Congresses, Conferences and other bodies; and, similarly, obeying the State laws whether they like them or not. Civil Disobedience is not a state of lawlessness and licence, but presupposes a law-abiding spirit combined with self-restraint.

Criminal Disobedience

When a man wilfully breaks his own laws, the disobedience becomes criminal. For, he commits the breach not against himself but against some one else, and not only escapes punishment for the breach, for there is none provided against himself by the makers of laws, but he avoids also the inconvenience caused by their observance. What is true of the individual is true of the corporation.

Therefore, only when a citizen has disciplined himself in the art of voluntary obedience to the State laws is he justified on rare occasions deliberately, but non-violently, to disobey them and expose himself to the penalty of the breach.

—*Young India*: Nov. 17, 1921.

27. WHAT IS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE ?

I HAVE found that it is our first duty to render voluntary obedience to law, but whilst doing that duty, I have also seen that when law fosters untruth, it becomes a duty to disobey it. How may this be done? We can do so by never swerving from Truth and suffering the consequences of our disobedience. That is Civil Disobedience. No rules can tell us how this disobedience may be done and by whom, when and where; nor can they tell us which laws foster untruth. It is only experience that can guide us, and it requires time and knowledge of facts.

—*Young India*: Sept. 13, 1919.

28. THE LAW OF OUR BEING

IN Civil Disobedience, the resister suffers the consequences of disobedience. This was what Daniel did when he disobeyed the laws of the Medes and Persians. That is what John Bunyan did, and that is what the *ryots* have done in India from times immemorial. It is the Law of Our Being. Violence is the Law of the Beast in us. Self-suffering, *i.e.*, Civil Resistance, is the Law of the Man in us. It is rarely that the occasion for Civil Resistance arises in a well-ordered State. But when it does, it becomes a duty that cannot be shirked by one who counts his honour, *i.e.*, conscience, above everything.

—*Young India*: Oct. 21, 1921.

29. THE LIVING WATER OF LIFE

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE is like the use of a knife to be used most sparingly, if at all. A man who cuts away without ceasing cuts at the very root, and finds himself without the substance he was trying to reach by cutting off the superficial hard crust. The use of Civil Disobedience will be healthy, necessary, and effective only if we otherwise conform to the laws of all growth. We must, therefore, give its full and, therefore, greater value to the adjective 'civil' than to 'disobedience'. Disobedience without civility, discipline, discriminaton, non-violence, is certain destruction. Disobedience combined with love is the living water of life. Civil Disobedience is a beautiful variant to signify growth, it is not discordance which spells death.

—*Young India*: Jan. 5, 1922.

30. INHERENT RIGHT OF A CITIZEN

I WISH I could persuade everybody that Civil Disobedience is the inherent right of a citizen. He dare not give it up without ceasing to be a man. Civil Disobedience is never followed by anarchy. Criminal Disobedence can lead to it. Every State puts down Criminal Disobedience by force. It perishes, if it does not. But to put down Civil Disobedience is to attempt to imprison conscience. Civil Disobedience can only lead to strength and purity. A civil resister never uses arms, and hence he is harmless to a State that is at all willing to listen to the voice of public opinion. He is dangerous for an autocratic State, for he brings about its fall by engaging public opinion upon the matter for which he resists the State. Civil Disobedience, therefore, becomes a sacred duty when the State has become lawless, or, which is the same thing, corrupt. And a citizen that barters with such a State shares its corruption or lawlessness.

Birthright that Cannot be Surrendered

It is, therefore, possible to question the wisdom of applying Civil Disobedience in respect of a particular act or law; it is possible to advise delay and caution. But the right itself cannot be allowed to be questioned. It is a birthright that cannot be surrendered without surrender of one's self-respect.

At the same time that the right of Civil Disobedience is insisted upon, its use must be guarded by all conceivable restrictions. Every possible provision should

be made against an outbreak of violence or general lawlessness. Its area as well as its scope should also be limited to the barest necessity of the case.

—*Young India*: Jan. 5, 1922.

31. AGGRESSIVE Vs. DEFENSIVE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

IT is necessary to understand the exact distinction between aggressive Civil Disobedience and defensive. Aggressive, assertive or offensive Civil Disobedience is non-violent, wilful disobedience of laws of the State, whose breach does not involve moral turpitude and which is undertaken as a symbol of revolt against the State. Thus, disregard of laws relating to revenue or regulation of personal conduct for the convenience of the State, although such laws in themselves inflict no hardship and do not require to be altered, would be assertive, aggressive or offensive Civil Disobedience.

Defensive Civil Disobedience, on the other hand, is involuntary or reluctant non-violent disobedience of such laws as are in themselves bad and obedience to which would be inconsistent with one's self-respect or human dignity. Thus, formation of Volunteer Corps for peaceful purposes, holding of public meetings for like purposes, publication of articles not contemplating or inciting to violence in spite of prohibitory orders, is defensive Civil Disobedience. And so is conducting of peaceful picketing undertaken with a view to wean people from things or institutions picketed in spite of

orders to the contrary. The fulfilment of the conditions mentioned above is as necessary for defensive Civil Disobedience as for offensive Civil Disobedience.

—*Young India*: Feb. 9, 1922.

32. INDIVIDUAL Vs. MASS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE can be made a sovereign remedy for all our ills, if we can produce the necessary atmosphere for it. For individuals, there always is that atmosphere except when their Civil Disobedience is certain to lead to bloodshed. I discovered this exception during the *Satyagraha* days (1919). But even so, a call may come which one dare not neglect, cost what it may. When neglect of the call means a denial of God, Civil Disobedience becomes a peremptory duty.

Mass Civil Disobedience stands on a different footing. It can only be tried in a calm atmosphere. It must be the calmness of strength not weakness, of knowledge not ignorance. Individual Civil Disobedience may be, and often is, vicarious. Mass Civil Disobedience may be, and often is, selfish in the sense that individuals expect personal gain from their disobedience. Thus, in South Africa, Kallenbach and Polak offered vicarious Civil Disobedience. They had nothing to gain. Thousands offered it because they expected personal gain also in the shape, say, of the removal of the annual poll-tax levied upon ex-indentured men and their wives and grown-up children. It is sufficient in mass

Civil Disobedience if the resisters understand the working of the doctrine.

—*Young India*: Aug. 4, 1921.

33. MASS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

MASS Civil Disobedience cannot be made. It must be spontaneous,[1] if it is to deserve the name and if it is to be successful. And there certainly will be no mass response where the ground has not been previously tilled, manured and watered. The greatest precaution has to be taken everywhere against an outbreak of violence.[2] Two opposite forces can never work concurrently so as to help each other. The plan of Civil Disobedience has been conceived to neutralize and ultimately entirely to displace violence and enthrone non-violence in its stead, to replace hatred by love, to replace strife by concord.

—*Young India*: March 27, 1930.

34. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE Vs. ARMED REBELLION

COMPLETE Civil Disobedience is a state of peaceful rebellion—a refusal to obey every single State-made law. It is certainly more dangerous than an armed rebellion. For, it can never be put down if

1. "Mass Civil Disobedience means spontaneous action. The workers will merely guide the masses in the beginning stages. Later, the masses will regulate the movement themselves."

—*Young India*: April 3, 1930.

2. "The only stipulation for Civil Disobedience is perfect observance of non-violence in the fullest sense of the term."

—*Young India*: April 3, 1930.

the civil resisters are prepared to face extreme hardships. It is based upon an implicit belief in the absolute efficiency of innocent suffering. By noiselessly going to prison, a civil resister ensures a calm atmosphere. The wrong-doer wearies of wrong-doing in the absence of resistance. All pleasure is lost when the victim betrays no resistance.[1]

—*Young India*: Aug. 4, 1921.

35. SYNONYM FOR SUFFERING

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE asks for and needs not a single farthing for its support. It needs and asks for stout hearts with a faith that will not flinch from any danger and will shine the brightest in the face of severest trial.[2] Civil Disobedience is a terrifying synonym for suffering. But it is better often to understand the terrible nature of a thing, if people will truly appreciate its benignant counter-part. Disobedience is a right that belongs to every human being, and it becomes a sacred duty when it springs from civility, or, which is the same thing, love.... But the

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1. "There is no zest in killing one who welcomes death and, therefore, soldiers are keen upon seizing the enemy alive. If the mouse did not flee before the cat, the cat would be driven to seek another pray. If all lambs voluntarily lay with the lion, the lion would be compelled to give up feasting upon lambs. Great hunters would give up hunting if the lion took to non-resistance."

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: P. 306.

2. "*Satyagraha* does not require the learning that books give, but does require the stout heart that comes from suffering and faith."

—*Harijan*: Feb. 24, 1940.

condition of this terrible resistance....is possible of fulfilment only by a strong, and if need be, a long course of self-purification and suffering.

—*Young India*: April 1, 1926.

36. OBEDIENCE TO STATE LAWS

BEFORE one can be fit for the practice of Civil Disobedience, one must have rendered a willing and respectful obedience to the State laws. For the most part, we obey such laws for fear of the penalty for their breach, and this holds good particularly in respect of such laws as do not involve a moral principle. For instance, an honest, respectable man will not suddenly take to stealing whether there is a law against stealing or not, but this very man will not feel any remorse for failure to observe the rule about carrying head-lights on bicycles after dark. Indeed, it is doubtful whether he would even accept advice kindly about being more careful in this respect. But he would observe any obligatory rule of this kind, if only to escape the inconvenience of facing a prosecution for a breach of the rule. Such compliance is not, however, the willing and spontaneous obedience that is required of a *Satyagrahi*. A *Satyagrahi* obeys the laws of society intelligently and of his own free will, because he considers it to be his sacred duty to do so. It is only when a person has thus obeyed the laws of society scrupulously, that he is in a position to judge as to which particular rules are good and just, and which unjust and iniquitous. Only then does the right accrue to him

of the Civil Disobedience of certain laws in well-defined circumstances.

—*My Experiments With Truth* (1945): P. 378.

37. SATYAGRAHI IS LAW-ABIDING

A SATYAGRAHI is nothing if not instinctively law-abiding, and it is his law-abiding nature which exacts from him implicit obedience to the highest law, that is, the Voice of Conscience, which over-rides all other laws. His civil disobedience even of certain laws is only seeming disobedience. Every law gives the subject an option either to obey the primary sanction, or the secondary, and I venture to suggest that the *Satyagrahi*, by inviting the secondary sanction, obeys the law. He does not act like the ordinary offender who not only commits a breach of the laws of the land, whether good or bad, but wishes to avoid the consequences of that breach.

When to Withdraw Obedience

So far as good laws are concerned, that is, laws which lay down moral principles, the *Satyagrahi* may not break them. But the other laws are neither good nor bad, moral nor immoral. They may be useful or may even be harmful. Those laws one obeys for the supposed good government of the country. Such laws are laws made for the purpose of revenue, or political laws creating statutory offences. Those laws enable the Government to continue its power. When, therefore, a Government goes wrong to the extent of

hurting the national fibre itself, it becomes the right of a subject, indeed it is his duty, to withdraw his obedience to such laws to the extent it may be required in order to bend the Government to the national will.

—*Speeches & Writings of M. Gandhi*: P. 465.

38. DUTY OF DISOBEDIENCE

A LITTLE reflection will show that Civil Disobedience is a necessary part of Non-co-operation. You assist an administration most effectively by obeying its orders and decrees. An evil administration never deserves such allegiance. Allegiance to it means partaking of the evil. A good man will, therefore, resist an evil system or administration with his whole soul. Disobedience of the laws of an evil State is, therefore, a duty. Violent disobedience deals with men who can be replaced. It leaves the evil itself untouched, and often accentuates it. Non-violent, *i.e.* civil, disobedience is the only and the most successful remedy and is obligatory upon him who would dissociate himself from evil.

A Sovereign Method

There is danger in Civil Disobedience only because it is still only a partially tried remedy, and has always to be tried in an atmosphere surcharged with violence. For, when tyranny is rampant, much rage is generated among the victims. It remains latent because of their weakness, and bursts in all its fury on the slightest pre-

text. Civil Disobedience is sovereign method of transmuting this undisciplined, life-destroying, latent energy into disciplined life-saving energy whose use ensures absolute success. The attendant risk is nothing compared to the result promised. When the world has become familiar with its use, and when it has had a series of demonstrations of its successful working, there will be less risk in Civil Disobedience than there is in aviation, in spite of that science having reached a high stage of development.

—*Young India*: March 27, 1930.

39. WHAT IS SATYAGRAHA?

WHAT is *Satyagraha?* It has often been described. But just as the sun cannot be *fully* described even by the myriad-tongued Sheshnaga, so also the sun of *Satyagraha* cannot be adequately described. And though we always see the sun but know really very little of it, even so we do ever seem to see the sun of *Satyagraha*, but we know precious little about it.

—*Teachings of M. Gandhi*: P. 493.

Like a Banyan Tree

Satyagraha is like a banyan tree with innumerable branches. Civil Disobedience is one such branch. *Satya* (Truth) and *Ahimsa* (Non-violence) together make the parent trunk from which all innumerable branches shoot out. We have found by bitter experience that whilst in an atmosphere of lawlessness Civil Disobedience found ready acceptance, *Satya* (Truth) and

Ahimsa (Non-violence), from which alone Civil Disobedience can worthily spring, have commanded little or no respect. Ours, then, is a Herculean task, but we may not shirk it. We must fearlessly spread the doctrine of *Satya* and *Ahimsa* and then, and not till then, shall we be able to undertake mass *Satyagraha*.

—*Young India*: May 1, 1919.

The Eternal Law

Indeed, if all of us regulated our lives by this eternal law of *Satya* and *Ahimsa*, there will be no occasion for civil or other resistance. Civil Resistance comes into play when only a small body of men endeavour to follow Truth in the face of opposition. It is difficult to know what is Truth, when to defend it to the point of Civil Resistance, and how to avoid error in the shape of violence in one's pursuit after Truth.

—*Young India*: March 30, 1922.

40. DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE

IT has been my belief and practice for over forty years deliberately to practise the Doctrine of Non-resistance to evil, not to retaliate. There are more instances than one in my public life when, with the ability to retaliate, I have refrained from doing so and advised friends to do likewise. My life is dedicated to the spread of that doctrine. I read it in the teachings of all the greatest teachers of the world—Zoroaster, Mahavir, Daniel, Jesus, Mohammed, Nanak and a host of

others. Indeed, I am not sure that we do justice to Moses when we impute to him the doctrine of retaliation, in the sense that he made it obligatory on his followers to exact an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. It may be my wish that is father to the thought. But I do think that in an age when people were unrestrained in their appetite for the enemy's blood, Moses restricted retaliation to equal measure and no more.

—*Young India*: Feb. 9, 1922.

41. MY MISSION

MY mission is to teach by example and precept, under severe restraint, the use of matchless weapon of *Satyagraha,* which is a direct corollary of Non-violence and Truth. I am anxious, indeed I am impatient, to demonstrate that there is no remedy for the many ills of life save that of Non-violence. . . . When I have become incapable of evil and when nothing harsh or haughty occupies, be it momentarily, my thought-world, then, and not till then, my non-violence will move all the hearts of all the world.

I have placed before me and the reader no impossible ideal or ordeal. It is man's prerogative and birthright. We have lost the paradise only to regain it. If it takes time, then it is but a speck in the complete time-circle. The Divine Teacher of the *Gita* knew when he said that millions of our days are equal to only a day of *Brahma.*

—*Young India*: July 2, 1925.

42. THE SCIENCE OF SATYAGRAHA

I HAVE never claimed to be the one original *Satyagrahi*. What I have claimed is to have made the application of that doctrine on an almost universal scale, and it yet remains to be seen and demonstrated that it is a doctrine which is capable of assimilation by thousands upon thousands of peoples in all ages and climes. I know, therefore, that mine is an experiment still in the making and it, therefore, always keeps me humble and rooted to the soil; and in that state of humility I always cling to every true example of *Satyagraha* that comes under my notice, as a child clings to its mother's breast.

—*Young India*: Sep. 22, 1927.

A Science in The Making

I am myself daily growing in the knowledge of *Satyagraha*. I have no text-book to consult in time of need, not even the *Gita* which I have called my dictionary. *Satyagraha*, as conceived by me, is a science in the making. It may be that what I claim to be a science may prove to be no science at all, and may well prove to be the musings and doings of a fool, if not a mad man. It may be that what is true in *Satyagraha* is as ancient as the hills.

—*Harijan*: Sept. 24, 1938.

Satyagrahi Does Not Know The Whole Science

Satyagraha, by the vast mass of mankind, will be impossible, if they had all to assimilate the doctrine

in all its implications. I cannot claim to have assimilated all its implications, nor do I claim even to know them all. A soldier of an army does not know the whole of military science; so also does a *Satyagrahi* not know the whole science of *Satyagraha*. It is enough if he trusts his commander and honestly follows his instructions and is ready to suffer unto death without bearing malice against the so-called enemy.

—*Harijan*: Oct. 22, 1938.

43. RULES OF SATYAGRAHA

SATYAGRAHA literally means insistence on Truth. This insistence arms the votary with matchless power. This power or force is connoted by the word *Satyagraha*. *Satyagraha*, to be genuine, may be offered against one's wife or one's children, against rulers, against fellow citizens, even against the whole world.

Such universal force necessarily makes no distinction between kinsmen and strangers, young and old, man and woman, friend and foe. The force to be so applied can never be physical. There is in it no room for violence. The only force of universal application can, therefore, be that of *Ahimsa* or love. In other words, it is soul-force.

Love does not burn others, it burns itself. Therefore, a *Satyagrahi*, i.e. a civil resister, will joyfully suffer even unto death.

—*Young India*: Feb. 27, 1930.

44. THE WORKING OF SATYAGRAHA

IT is a force that works silently and apparently slowly. In reality, there is no force in the world that is so direct or so swift in working. But sometimes apparent success is more quickly attained by brute force. To earn one's living by body-labour is a method of earning it by *Satyagraha*. A gamble on the stock-exchange or house-breaking, either of which is the reverse of *Satyagraha*, may apparently lead to an instantaneous acquisition of wealth. But the world has by now, I presume, realized that gambling and house-breaking are no methods of earning one's livelihood, and that they do harm rather than good to the gambler or the thief.

—*Young India*: June 4, 1925.

45. A POWERFUL METHOD OF DIRECT ACTION

SINCE *Satyagraha* is one of the most powerful methods of direct action, a *Satyagrahi* exhausts all other means before he resorts to *Satyagraha*. He will, therefore, constantly and continually approach the constituted authority, he will appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his case calmly and coolly before everybody who wants to listen to him; and only after he has exhausted all these avenues will he resort to *Satyagraha*. But when he has found the impelling call of the Inner Voice within him, and launches out upon *Satyagraha*, he has burnt his boats and there is no receding.

—*Young India*: Oct. 20, 1927.

46. HUMILITY OF A SATYAGRAHI

THE humility of a *Satyagrahi* knows no bounds. He does not let slip a single opportunity for settlement, and he does not mind if anyone, therefore, looks upon him as timid. The man who has faith in him and the strength which flows from that faith, does not care if he is looked down upon by others. He relies solely upon his internal strength. He is, therefore, courteous to all, and thus cultivates and enlists world opinion in favour of his own cause.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: P. 442.

47. QUALITIES OF A SATYAGRAHI

THE *Satyagrahi*, whilst he is ever ready for fight, must be equally eager for peace. He must welcome any honourable opportunity for peace.... The essential condition of a compromise is that there should be nothing humiliating, nothing panicky about it.... Whilst, however, a *Satyagrahi* never yields to panic or hesitancy, neither does he think of humiliating the other party, of reducing it to an abject surrender. He may not swerve from the path of justice and may not dictate impossible terms. He may not pitch his demands too high, neither may he pitch them too low.

A *Satyagrahi* has infinite patience, abundant faith in others, ample hope.

—*Young India*: March 19, 1931.

48. THE CAUSE HAS TO BE JUST

THERE can be no *Satyagraha* in an unjust cause.[1] *Satyagraha* in a just cause is vain if the men espousing it are not determined and capable of fighting and suffering to the end, and the slightest use of violence often defeats a just cause. *Satyagraha* excludes the use of violence in any shape or form, whether in thought, speech, or deed. Given a just cause, capacity for endless suffering and avoidance of violence, victory is a certainty.

—*Young India*: April 27, 1921.

49. SATYAGRAHI IS EVER VICTORIOUS

WHERE the means are clean, there God is undoubtedly present with His blessings. And where these three combine, there defeat is an impossibility. A *Satyagrahi*, whether free or incarcerated, is ever victorious. He is vanquished only when he forsakes Truth and Non-violence and turns a deaf ear to the Inner Voice. If, therefore, there is such a thing as defeat for even a *Satyagrahi*, he alone is the cause of it.

—*Young India*: March 20, 1930.

Success Attends Suffering

According to the science of *Satyagraha*, the greater the repression and lawlessness on the part of authority, the greater should be the suffering courted by the vic-

1. "In *Satyagraha*, the cause has to be just and clear as well as the means."

—*Harijan*: Aug. 4, 1946.

tims. Success is the certain result of suffering of the extremist character, voluntarily undergone.

—*Young India*: May 8, 1930.

50. TRUE SUFFERING

IT would be wrong to brood over the sufferings, to exaggerate them, or to be puffed up with pride. True suffering does not know itself and never calculates. It brings its own joy which surpasses all other joys.... Whilst we must try always to avoid occasions for needless suffering, we must ever be ready for them. Somehow or other, those who will walk along the right path cannot avoid suffering notwithstanding the attempt to avoid it. It is the privilege of the patriot, the reformer and, still greater, of the *Satyagrahi*.

—*Young India*: March 19, 1931.

51. THE LAW OF SURRENDER

AS a *Satyagrahi*, I believe in the absolute efficacy of full surrender.

In the code of the *Satyagrahi*, there is no such thing as surrender to brute force. Or, the surrender then is the surrender of suffering and not to the will of the wielder of bayonet. A *Satyagrahi's* surrender has to come out of his strength, not out of weakness. The surrender advised by me is not of honour, but of earthly goods. There is no loss of honour in surrendering seats and positions of emoluments. There

is loss of honour in haggling about them. . . . The law of surrender and suffering is a universal law, admitting of no exceptions.

—*Young India*: April 30, 1931.

52. A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

IT is a fundamental principle of *Satyagraha* that the tyrant, whom the *Satyagrahi* seeks to resist, has power over his body and material possessions, but he can have no power over the soul. The soul can remain unconquered and unconquerable even when the body is imprisoned. The whole science of *Satyagraha* was born from a knowledge of this fundamental truth.

—*Young India*: May 21, 1931.

53. THE LIMITS OF SATYAGRAHA

SATYAGRAHA presupposes self-discipline, self-control, self-purification, and a recognized social status in the person offering it. A *Satyagrahi* must never forget the distinction between evil and the evil-doer. He must not harbour ill-will or bitterness against the latter. He may not even employ needlessly offensive language against the evil person, however unrelieved his evil might be. For, it should be an article of faith with every *Satyagrahi* that there is none so fallen in this world but can be converted by love. A *Satyagrahi* will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, *Himsa* by *Ahimsa*. There is no other way of purging the world of evil. Therefore, a person who claims to be a *Satyagrahi* al-

ways tries, by close and prayerful self-introspection and self-analysis, to find out whether he is himself completely free from the taint of anger, ill-will and such other human infirmities, whether he is not himself capable of those very evils against which he is out to lead a crusade. In self-purification and penance lies half the victory of a *Satyagrahi*. A *Satyagrahi* has faith that the silent and undemonstrative action of Truth and Love produces far more permanent and abiding results than speeches or such other showy performances.

Need of Rousing Public Opinion

But although *Satyagraha* can operate silently, it requires a certain amount of action on the part of a *Satyagrahi*. A *Satyagrahi*, for instance, must first mobilize public opinion against the evil which he is out to eradicate, by means of a wide and intensive agitation. When public opinion is sufficiently roused against a social abuse, even the tallest will not dare to practise or openly to lend support to it. An awakened and intelligent public opinion is the most potent weapon of a *Satyagrahi*. When a person supports a social evil in total disregard of unanimous public opinion, it indicates a clear justification for his social ostracism. But the object of social ostracism should never be to do injury to the person against whom it is directed. Social ostracism means complete non-co-operation on the part of society with the offending individual; nothing more, nothing less, the idea being that a person who deliberately sets himself to flout society has no right to be served by society. For all practical purposes, this

should be enough. Of course, special action may be indicated in special cases and the practice may have to be varied to suit the peculiar features of each individual case.

—*Young India*: Aug. 8, 1929.

54. SECRECY DOES NO GOOD

SECRECY does no good to our cause.... *Satyagraha* is more than cleverness. Secrecy takes away from its dignity. *Satyagrahis* have no reason to have secret books or secret funds. I am aware that my opinion has not found favour among many co-workers. But I have seen no reason to change it. I admit I was lukewarm before. Experience has taught me that I should have been firm.

—*Harijan*: April 13, 1940.

Secrecy aims at building a wall of protection round you. *Ahimsa* disdains all such protection. It functions in the open and in the face of odds, the heaviest conceivable.... I have grown up from youth to 76 years in abhorrence of secrecy. There must be no watering down of the ideal. Unless we cling to the formula in its fullness, we shall not make any headway.

—*Harijan*: Feb. 10, 1946.

I hold it to be contrary to *Satyagraha* to do anything secretly or impatiently.... A *Satyagrahi* has no secrets to keep from his opponent or so-called enemy.

—*Young India*: Feb. 20, 1930.

55. TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE

TRUTH hates secrecy. The more open you are, the more truthful you are likely to be. There is no such thing as defeat or despair in the dictionary of a man who bases his life on Truth and Non-violence. And yet the method of non-violence is not in any shape or form a passive or inactive method. It is essentially an active movement, much more active than the one involving the use of sanguinary weapons. Truth and Non-violence are perhaps the activest forces you have in the world. A man who wields sanguinary weapons and is intent upon destroying those whom he considers his enemies, does at least require some rest and has to lay down his arms for a while in every twenty-four hours. He is, therefore, essentially inactive, for a certain part of the day. Not so the votary of Truth and Non-violence, for the simple reason that they are not external weapons. They reside in the human breast and they are actively working their way, whether you are awake or whether you are asleep, whether you are walking leisurely or playing an active game. The panoplied warrior of Truth and Non-violence is ever and incessantly active.

—*Young India*: Dec. 31, 1931.

56. SATYAGRAHI ALWAYS TRUSTS

A SATYAGRAHI, bids good-bye to fear. He is, therefore, never afraid of trusting the opponent. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the *Satyagrahi* is ready to trust him the twenty-first time;

for, an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed.

Pain Same as Pleasure

No matter how often a *Satyagrahi* is betrayed, he will repose his trust in the adversary so long as there are not cogent grounds for distrust. Pain to a *Satyagrahi* is the same as pleasure. He will not, therefore, be misled by the mere fear of suffering into groundless distrust. On the other hand, relying as he does upon his own strength, he will not mind being betrayed by the adversary, will continue to trust in spite of frequent betrayals, and will believe that he thereby strengthens the forces of Truth and brings victory nearer.

Distrust—A Sign of Weakness

The author of the Sanskrit saying: 'Forgiveness is an ornament to the brave', drew upon his rich experience of *Satyagrahis* never giving anyone the least opportunity of finding fault with them. Distrust is a sign of weakness and *Satyagraha* implies the banishment of all weakness and, therefore, of distrust, which is clearly out of place when the adversary is not to be destroyed but to be won over.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: Pp. 246, 332-33.

57. THE NON-VIOLENT WAY

We may not regard anybody as irreclaimable. We should try to understand the psychology of the evil-doer. He is very often the victim of his circumstances.

By patience and sympathy, we shall be able to win over at least some of them to the side of justice. Moreover, we should not forget that even evil is sustained through the co-operation, either willing or forced, of good. Truth alone is self-sustained. In the last resort, we can curb the power of the evil-doers to do mischief, by withdrawing all co-operation from them and completely isolating them. This, in essence, is the principle of Non-violent Non-co-operation.

Acid Test of Non-Violence

It follows, therefore, that it must have its root in love. Its object should not be to punish the opponent or to inflict injury upon him. Even while non-co-operating with him, we must make him feel that in us he has a friend and we should try to reach his heart by rendering him humanitarian service whenever possible. In fact, it is the acid test of non-violence that a non-violent conflict leaves no rancour behind, and in the end the enemies are converted into friends. That was my experience in South Africa with General Smuts. He started by being my bitterest opponent and critic. Today, he is my warmest friend. For eight years, we were ranged on opposite sides. But during the Second Round Table Conference, it was he who stood by me and, in public as well as in private, gave me his full support. This is only one instance out of many that I can quote.

—*A Pilgrimage for Peace*: P. 77.

58. TO THE SATYAGRAHIS

WHAT I shall expect of you is that even if some one subjects you to the most inhuman tortures, you will joyfully face the ordeal and make the supreme sacrifice with God's name on your lips and without a trace of fear or anger or thought of revenge in your hearts. That will be heroism of the highest type. To fight with the sword does call for bravery of a sort. But to die is braver far than to kill. He alone is truly brave, he alone is martyr in the true sense, who dies without fear in his heart and without wishing hurt to his enemy, not the one who kills and dies. If our country, even in its present fallen state, can exhibit this type of bravery, what a beacon light will it be for Europe with all its discipline, science and organization! If Europe but realized that, heroic as it undoubtedly is for a handful of people to offer armed resistance in the face of superior numbers, it is far more heroic to stand up against overwhelming numbers without any arms at all, it would save itself and blaze a trail for the world.

Use of The Sword

I have read the *Quran* with as much care and reverence as I have read the *Gita*. I have read other important books on Islam, too. I claim to have as much regard in my heart for Islam and other religions as for my own, and I dare say with all the emphasis that I can command that, although the sword has been wielded in the history of Islam and that, too, in the

name of religion, Islam was not founded by the sword nor was it spread due to it. Similarly, in Christianity, the sword has been freely used. But the spread of Christianity was not due to its use. On the contrary, the use of the sword has only tarnished its fair name. Millions in Europe swear by Christianity. But contrary to the teachings of Jesus, they are engaged in a fratricidal orgy of bloodshed and murder, which is a negation of true Christianity.

Renunciation of The Sword

You should renounce the sword because you have realized that it is the symbol not of your strength but of your weakness, because it does not make for true bravery. But if you put away your sword outwardly but there is the sword in your hearts, you shall have begun the wrong way and your renunciation will be devoid of any merit. It may even prove dangerous.

If you give up the sword but retain it in your hearts, your non-violence will be a short-lived thing—not even a nine days' wonder. After a few years you will want to revert to it, but, may be, you will then find that you have got out of the habit and are lost to both the ideals. Nothing will, in that event, remain to you but vain regret. What I want of you is a unique thing, *i.e.*, that you will disdain to use the sword although you have got the capacity and there is no doubt as to victory. Even if the opponent is armed with a broken sword, you will offer your neck to it. And this, not with anger or retaliation in your hearts but only love. If you have really understood non-

violence in this sense, you will never want to use the sword because you will have got something infinitely superior in its place.

Mere Renunciation Not Enough

Mere renunciation of the sword, if there is a sword in your heart, will not carry you far. Your renunciation of the sword cannot be said to be genuine unless it generates in your hearts a power, the opposite of that of the sword and superior to it. In non-violence, even if somebody regards you as his enemy, you may not so regard him in return, and, of course, there can be no question of revenge.

—*A Pilgrimage for Peace*: Pp. 56, 58, 59, 98, 115.

Satyagrahi Cannot Remain Idle

A person who renounces the sword dare not remain idle for a single minute. An idle man's brain, as the popular proverb says, is the devil's workshop. Idleness corrodes the soul and intellect both. A person who has renounced violence will take the name of God with every breath, and do His work all the twenty-four hours. There will be no room for an idle thought.

—*A Pilgrimage for Peace*: P. 60.

59. SATYAGRAHI Vs. SOLDIER-IN-ARMS

A SOLDIER-IN-ARMS is trained to kill. Even his dreams are about killing. He dreams of fighting, of winning fame and advancement on the battlefield by the prowess of his arms. He has reduced killing to

an art. When he is not engaged in fighting, he occupies himself with eating, drinking, swearing and making merry in the way he knows. A *Satyagrahi*, on the other hand, would always long for opportunity for silent service. All his time would be given to labour of love. If he dreams, it will not be about killing, but about laying down his life to serve others. He has reduced dying innocently and for his fellowmen to an art.

—*A Pilgrimage for Peace*: P. 66.

60. WHAT SATYAGRAHA TEACHES

SATYAGRAHA teaches us the art of living as well as dying. Birth and death are inevitable among mortals. What distinguishes the man from the brute is his conscious striving to realize the Spirit within. The last eighteen verses of the Second Chapter of the *Gita*, which are recited at the prayer, give in a nutshell the secret of the art of living. It is given there in the form of a description of a *Sthitaprajna* or a man of steady wisdom i.e., a *Satyagrahi*, in reply to Arjuna's query to Lord Krishna.

The art of dying follows as a corollary from the art of living. Death must come to all. A man may die of a lightning stroke, or as a result of heart failure, or failure of respiration. But that is not the death that a *Satyagrahi* can wish for or pray for himself. The art of dying for a *Satyagrahi* consists in facing death cheerfully in the performance of one's duty.[1]

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1. "A *Satyagrahi* must always be ready to die with a smile on his face without retaliation and without rancour in his heart."

—*Harijan*: July 1, 1946.

It is not enough not to want to hurt or take the life of your enemy. You are no *Satyagrahis* if you remain silent or passive spectators while your enemy is being done to death. You must protect him even at the cost of your life.

—*Harijan*: April 7, 1946.

61. FLESH Vs. SPIRIT

THERE does come a time when, with all the will in the world, the flesh refuses to suffer any further and makes the spirit its unwilling slave.

But if the spirit has at times been found weak enough to yield to the flesh after a certain point, it has also been found superior to the most excruciating tortures. Given sufficient previous mental preparation, the very extreme of suffering becomes an anæsthetic that deadens pain; where the spirit is willing, the exultation induced by the willingness counteracts the sensation of pain. The pleasure of serving one's country or religion more than balances the pain involved in it.

* * *

I do believe it as literally true that Mirabai never felt the pains inflicted upon her at the instance of her husband. Her love of God and conscious repetition of that precious Name kept her cheerful for ever. I can only picture the Rajput women of old rejoicing as they leapt into the funeral pyre with the name of God on their lips. Latimer certainly never felt the pain as he majestically stretched forth his hand straight into the fire. His faith in God and His righteousness had

saved him. The age of miracles is not past. But a little faith in God and His protecting power, and we are ensured against *unbearable* sufferings. Let no civil resister with faith in his mission doubt that at the crucial moment God will protect him.

—*Young India*: Jan. 5, 1922.

62. BEAUTY OF SATYAGRAHA

THIS is the beauty of *Satyagraha*. It comes up to us; we have not to go out in search for it. There is a virtue inherent in the principle itself. A *dharma-yuddha* (war of righteousness) in which there are no secrets to be guarded, no scope for cunning, and no place for untruth, comes unsought; and a man of religion is ever ready for it. A struggle which has to be previously planned is not a righteous struggle. In a righteous struggle, God Himself plans the campaigns and conducts the battles. A war of righteousness can be waged only in the name of God; and it is only when the *Satyagrahi* feels quite helpless, when he is apparently on his last legs and finds utter darkness all around him, that God comes to the rescue. God helps us when we feel ourselves humbler than the very dust under our feet. Only to the weak and helpless is Divine succour vouchsafed.

—*Speeches & Writings of M. Gandhi*: P. 204.

63. THE ARGUMENT OF SUFFERING

SATYAGRAHIS must not be dejected. They dare not give way to despair. Of all my Tamil lessons, one proverb at least abides with me as an evergreen.

Its literal meaning is: "God is the only Help for the helpless". The grand theory of *Satyagraha* is built upon a belief in that truth. Hindu religious literature, indeed all religious literature, is full of illustrations to prove the truth.... I may fail them. But God will never fail them, if they have faith in Him. Let them know that they are leaning on a broken reed if they are relying on me.... I may wipe their tears, but suffering is their sole privilege. And victory will surely come out of their sufferings, provided they are pure. God tries His votaries through and through, but never beyond endurance. He gives them strength enough to go through the ordeal. He prescribes for them. For the *Satyagrahis* their *Satyagraha* is not a mere experiment to be given up if it does not succeed within a prescribed time or after a prescribed course of suffering.[1] There is no time-limit for a *Satyagrahi*, nor is there a limit to his capacity for suffering. Hence, there is no such thing as defeat in *Satyagraha*. Their so-called defeat may be the dawn of victory. It may be the agony of birth.

Satyagraha is the argument of suffering. The hardest heart and the grossest ignorance must disappear before the rising sun of suffering without anger and without malice.

—*Young India*: Feb. 19, 1925.

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1. "A *Satyagrahi* has nothing to do with victory. He is sure of it, but he has also to know that it comes from God. His is but to suffer"

—*Young India*: Oct. 13, 1927.

64. SUFFERING MELTS THE STONIEST HEART

THE *Satyagrahi's* course is plain. He must stand unmoved in the midst of all cross-currents. He may not be impatient.... nor be irritated.... He must know that his suffering will melt the stoniest heart of the stoniest fanatic[1].... He must know that relief will come when there is the least hope for it. For, such is the way of that cruelly kind Deity, who insists upon testing His devotee through a fiery furnace and delights in humbling him to the dust. In his hour of distress, let the *Satyagrahi* recall to his mind the prayer of the fabled godly Elephant King,[2] who was saved only when he thought he was at his last gasp.

—*Young India*: June 4, 1925.

God Tries Us Through and Through

Satyagraha is undertaken not from a belief in human aid, but it is based upon an unquenchable faith in God and His justice. And God is both gentle and hard. He tries us through and through to the last suffering point, but He is so gentle as never to test us to the breaking point.

—*Young India*: Feb. 18, 1926.

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1. "Real suffering bravely borne melts even a heart of stone. Such is the potency of suffering or *tapas*. And therein lies the key to *Satyagraha*."

Satyagraha in South Africa: P. 17.

2. *Gajendra Moksha*.

65. THE ROOT OF SATYAGRAHA

THE root of *Satyagraha* is in prayer.[1] A *Satyagrahi* relies upon God for protection against the tyranny of the brute force. Why should you then be always afraid of.... anybody playing you false? If someone deceives you, he will be the loser. The fight of *Satyagraha* is for the strong in spirit, not the doubter or timid.

—*Harijan*: April 7, 1946.

66. RELIANCE UPON GOD

A SATYAGRAHI relies solely upon God who is the Help of the helpless. A *Satyagrahi* always says to himself: 'He in whose name *Satyagraha* was launched, will also see it through'.... A genuine *Satyagrahi* proceeds by setting the opponent at his ease. His action never creates panic in the breast of the 'enemy'.

—*Harijan*: May 20, 1939.

Strength Comes from Within

A *Satyagrahi* does not depend for his strength on external means. His strength comes from within, from his reliance on God. God becomes his shield when he throws down all his earthly weapons. But if he

1. "Prayer is not an old woman's idle amusement. Properly understood and applied, it is the most potent instrument of action.... Undoubtedly, prayer requires a living faith in God. Successful *Satyagraha* is inconceivable without that faith. God may be called by any other name so long as it connotes the living Law of Life—in other words, the Law and the Law-giver rolled into one."

—*Harijan*: April 14, 1946.

were to hide a fire-arm in his pocket, his inner strength would go and he would cease to feel invulnerable.

Provoking *lathi* charges or receiving *lathi* blows on your body in a spirit of bravado is not *Satyagraha*. True *Satyagraha* consists in the readiness to face blows if they come in the course of performing one's duty.

Faith in God

Satyagrahis must cultivate a living faith in God—an attitude of utter reliance on Him to the exclusion of all external aids.[1] A single *Satyagrahi* imbued with such faith will inspire the whole people by his example, and may induce a heart change even in the opponent who, freed from fear, will the more readily appreciate his simple faith and respect it.

—*Harijan*: June 3, 1939.

67. SELF-PURIFICATION AND SELF-SACRIFICE

ALL is in vain without His help.... A *Satyagrahi* has no power he can call his own. All the power he may seem to possess is from and of God. He, therefore, moves towards his goal carrying the world's opinion with him. Without the help of God, he is lame, blind, groping.

Ever since 1921, I have been reiterating two words, *self-purification* and *self-sacrifice*. God will not assist

1. "*Satyagraha* presupposes the living presence and guidance of God. The leader depends not on his own strength but on that of God. He acts as the Voice within guides him."

—*Young India*: August 2, 1928.

him without these two. The world is touched by sacrifice. It does not then discriminate about the merits of a cause. Not so God. He is all-seeing. He insists on the purity of the cause and on adequate sacrifice[1] therefor.

—*Young India*: April 3, 1930.

68. SATYAGRAHI'S ULTIMATE MAINSTAY

A SATYAGRAHI has no other stay but God, and he who has any other stay or depends on any other help cannot offer *Satyagraha*. He may be a passive resister, non-co-operator and so on, but not a true *Satyagrahi*. It is open to you to argue that this excludes brave comrades, whereas it may include men who profess a belief in God but who in their daily lives are untrue to their profession. I am not talking of those who are prepared in the name of God to stake their all for the sake of their principle. Don't ask me again why I am enunciating this principle today and did not do so 20 years ago. I can only say that I am no prophet; I am but an erring mortal, progressing from blunder towards truth. 'What about the Buddhists and Jains, then?' someone has asked. Well, I will say that if the Buddhists and Jains raise this objection themselves, and say that they would be disqualified if such a strict rule were observed, I should say to them that I agree with them.

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1. "The law of sacrifice is uniform throughout the world. To be effective, it demands the sacrifice of the bravest and the most spotless."

—*Young India*: April 24, 1930.

Only in His Strength We are Strong

But far be it from me to suggest that you should believe in the God that I believe in. Maybe, your definition is different from mine; but your belief in that God must be your ultimate mainstay. It may be some Supreme Power or some Being even indefinable, but belief in it is indispensable. To bear all kinds of tortures without a murmur or resentment is impossible for a human being without the strength that comes from God. Only in His strength, we are strong. And only those who can cast their cares and their fears on that Immeasurable Power have faith in God.

—*Harijan*: June 3, 1939.

69. DOMESTIC Vs. PUBLIC SATYAGRAHA

SATYAGRAHA is either offered by a few self-sacrificing persons in the name of the many weak, or by very few in the face of enormous odds. In the former case, many are willing but weak; and a few are willing and capable of sacrificing their all for the cause. In such a case, it is obvious they need no aid whatsoever.

In the case, too, of a very few offering *Satyagraha* against heavy odds, outside support is not permissible. Public *Satyagraha* is an extension of private or domestic *Satyagraha*. Every instance of public *Satyagraha* should be tested by imagining a parallel domestic case. Thus, suppose in my family I wish to remove the curse of untouchability. Suppose further that

my parents oppose the view, that I have the fire of the conviction of Prahlad, that my father threatens penalties, calls in even the assistance of the State to punish me. What should I do? May I invite my friends to suffer with me the penalties my father has devised for me? Or, is it not up to me meekly to bear all the penalties my father inflicts on me and absolutely rely on the Law of Suffering and Love to melt his heart and open his eyes to the evil of untouchability? It is open to me to bring in the assistance of learned men, the friends of the family, to explain to my father what he may not understand from me—his child. But I may allow no one to share with me the privilege and the duty of suffering. What is true of this supposed case of domestic *Satyagraha*, is equally true and no less of the case we have imagined of public *Satyagraha*.

—*Young India*: April 24, 1924.

70. IMPLICATIONS OF SATYAGRAHA METHOD

THE *Satyagrahi* seeks to convert his opponent by sheer force of character and suffering. The purer he is and the more he suffers, the quicker the progress. He must, therefore, resign himself to being excommunicated, debarred from the family privileges and deprived of his share in the family property. He must not only bear such hardships cheerfully, but he must actively love his persecutors. The latter honestly believe that the reformer is doing something sinful and, therefore, resort to the only means they know to be

effective to wean him from his supposed error. The *Satyagrahi*, on the other hand, does not seek to carry out his reform by a system of punishments but by penance, self-purification and suffering. Any resentment of the persecution, therefore, would be an interruption of the course of discipline he has imposed upon himself. It may be a prolonged course, it may even seem to be never ending. A little bullying or even moral suasion or coercion may appear more expeditious. What, however, I am showing here is not the greater efficacy of *Satyagraha*, but the implications of the method the *Satyagrahi* has deliberately chosen for himself. Indeed, I have often shown that *Satyagraha* is, as a matter of fact and in the long run, the most expeditious course.

—*Young India*: Sep. 18, 1924.

71. THE APPEAL OF REASON

EXPERIENCE has shown that mere appeal to the reason produces no effect upon those who have settled convictions. The eyes of their understanding are opened not by argument, but by the suffering of the *Satyagrahi*. The *Satyagrahi* strives to reach the reason through the heart. The method of reaching the heart is to awaken public opinion. Public opinion, for which one cares, is a mightier force than that of gunpowder.... I am sure that victory is a certainty if only the *Satyagrahis* will retain their patience and their spirit of suffering.

—*Young India*: March 19, 1925.

72. SUFFERING MOVES THE HEART

THE conviction has been growing upon me that things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by reason alone, but have to be purchased with their suffering. Suffering is the law of human beings; war is the law of the jungle. But suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears, which are otherwise shut, to the voice of reason. Nobody has probably drawn up more petitions or espoused more forlorn causes than I, and I have come to this fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done, you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head, but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man. Suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword.

—*India's Case for Swaraj*: P. 369.

73. HOW TO DEAL WITH OPPONENTS

OUR aim is not to do things by violence to opponents. That will be conversion by violence or compulsion. . . . We should carry on the struggle on the lines of strict non-violence, *i.e.* by suffering in our own person. That is the meaning of *Satyagraha*.

Love Your Opponents

The question is whether you are capable of every suffering that may be imposed upon you, or may be

your lot in the journey towards the goal. Even whilst you are suffering, you may have no bitterness—no trace of it—against your opponents. And I tell you it is not a mechanical act at all. On the contrary, I want you to feel like loving your opponents, and the way to do it is to give them the same credit for honesty of purpose which you would claim for yourself. I know that it is a difficult task.... And immediately we begin to think of things as our opponents think of them, we shall be able to do them full justice. I know that this requires a detached state of mind, and it is a state very difficult to reach. Nevertheless, for a *Satyagrahi* it is absolutely essential.

Suffering Opens the Eyes of Understanding

Three-fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings in the world will disappear, if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand their stand-point. We will then agree with our adversaries quickly or think of them charitably.... Our business, therefore, is to show them that they are in the wrong, and we should do so by *our* suffering. I have found that mere appeal to reason does not answer where prejudices are age-long and based on supposed religious authority. Reason has to be strengthened by suffering, and suffering opens the eyes of understanding. Therefore, there must be no trace of compulsion in our acts. We must not be impatient, and we must have an undying faith in the means we are adopting.... If you believe in the efficacy of *Satyagraha*, you will rejoice in this slow torture and suffering, and you will not

feel the discomfort of your position as you go and sit in the boiling sun from day to day. If you have faith in the cause and the means and in God, the hot sun will be cool for you. You must not be tired and say: 'how long?', and never get irritated.

A Relentless Search for Truth

Satyagraha is a relentless search for Truth and a determination to reach Truth. I can only hope you will realize the import of what you are doing. And if you do, your path will be easy—easy because you will take delight in difficulties and you will laugh in hope when everybody is in despair. I believe in the illustrations the *Rishis* or poets have given in religious books. For example, I literally believe in the possibility of a Sudhanva smiling away whilst he was being drowned in the boiling oil. For, to him, it was greater torture to forget his Maker than to be in boiling oil. And so it can be in a lesser measure here, if we have a spark of Sudhanva's faith in this struggle.

—*Young India*: March 19, 1925.

74. SATYAGRAHA DEMANDS ABSOLUTE NON-VIOLENCE

SATYAGRAHA demands absolute non-violence. Even a woman who is in danger of being violated must not defend herself with violence. But this is only for those men and women who have so far purified themselves as to have no malice, no anger, no violence in them. That does not mean that the woman in the imagined case would quietly allow herself to be violated.

In the first instance, such a woman would not stand in danger of violence; and, in the second, if she did, without doing violence to the ruffians, she would be able completely to defend her honour.... I believe implicitly in the proposition that perfect purity is its own defence. The veriest ruffian becomes, for the time being, tame in the presence of resplendent purity.

Punishment to Wrong-Doers

I am quite capable of recommending punishment to wrong-doers under conceivable circumstances; for instance, I would not hesitate in the present state of society to confine thieves and robbers, which is, in itself, a kind of punishment. But I would also admit that it is not *Satyagraha*, and that it is a fall from the pure doctrine. That would be not an admission of weakness of the doctrine, but weakness of myself. I have no other remedy to suggest in such cases in the present state of society. I am, therefore, satisfied with advocating the use of prisons more as reformatories than as places for punishment. But I would draw the distinction between killing and detention, or even corporal punishment. I think there is difference not merely in quantity, but also in quality. I can recall the punishment of detention. I can make reparation to the man upon whom I inflict corporal punishment. But once a man is killed, the punishment is beyond recall or reparation. God alone can take life, because He alone gives it.

—*Young India*: Oct. 8, 1925.

75. ESSENCE OF NON-VIOLENCE

THERE should be no confusion between the self-immolation of a *Satyagrahi* and the punishment imposed from without. But, in order to avoid even a possibility of it, let me make it clear that the doctrine of violence has reference only to the doing of injury by one to another. Suffering injury in one's person is, on the contrary, of the essence of non-violence; and is the chosen substitute for violence to others. It is not because I value life low that I can countenance with joy thousands voluntarily losing their lives for *Satyagraha;* but because I know that it results in the long run in the least loss of life, and, what is more, it ennobles those who lose their lives and morally enriches the world for their sacrifice. This doctrine holds good also as between states and states.

—*Young India*: Oct. 8, 1925.

76. RESISTANCE OF THE SOUL

I DO justify entire non-violence, and consider it possible in relations between man and man and nations and nations; but it is not a "resignation from all real fighting against wickedness". On the contrary, the non-violence of my conception is a more active and more real fighting against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness. I contemplate a mental, and, therefore, a moral opposition to immoralities.

I seek entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant's sword, not by putting up against it a sharper-edged

weapon, but by disappointing his expectation that I would be offering physical resistance. The resistance of the soul, that I should offer instead, would elude him. It would at first dazzle him, and at last compel recognition from him, which recognition would not humiliate him but uplift him.

It may be urged, this again is an ideal state. And so it is. The propositions from which I have drawn my arguments are as true as Euclid's definitions, which are nonetheless true because in practice we are unable even to draw Euclid's line on a black-board. But even a geometrician finds it impossible to get on without bearing in mind Euclid's definitions. Nor may we dispense with the fundamental proposition on which the doctrine of *Satyagraha* is based.

—*Young India*: Oct. 8, 1925.

77. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF SATYAGRAHA

NOTHING better can happen to a *Satyagrahi* than meeting death all unsought in the very act of *Satyagraha,* i.e., pursuing Truth. All these propositions are true only of a struggle like the *Satyagraha* movement, where there is no room for hatred, where self-reliance is the order of the day, where no one has to look expectantly at another, where there are no leaders and hence no followers, or where all are leaders and all are followers, so that the death of a fighter, however eminent, makes not for slackness but, on the other hand, intensifies the struggle.

The Secret of Satyagraha

Such is the pure and essential nature of *Satyagraha*, not realized in practice, because not every one of us has shed hatred. In actual practice, the secret of *Satyagraha* is not understood by all, and the many are apt unintelligently to follow the few. Again, as Tolstoy observed, the Transvaal struggle was the first attempt at applying the principle of *Satyagraha* to masses or bodies of men. I do not know any historical example of pure mass *Satyagraha*. I cannot however formulate any definite opinion on the point, as my knowledge of history is limited. But, as a matter of fact, we have nothing to do with historical precedents. Granted the fundamental principles of *Satyagraha*, it will be seen that the consequences I have described are bound to follow as night follows the day. It will not do to dismiss such a valuable force with the remark that it is difficult or impossible of application. Brute force has been the ruling factor in the world for thousands of years, and mankind has been reaping its bitter harvest all along, as he who runs may read. There is little hope of anything good coming out of it in the future. If light can come out of darkness, then alone can love emerge from hatred.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: P. 187.

78. NO RETREAT IN SATYAGRAHA

MY experience has taught me that a Law of Progression applies to every righteous struggle. But, in the case of *Satyagraha*, the law amounts to an axiom.

As the Ganga advances other streams flow into it, and hence at the mouth it grows so wide that neither bank is to be seen and a person sailing upon the river cannot make out where the river ends and the sea begins. So also as a *Satyagraha* struggle progresses onward, many another element helps to swell its current, and there is a constant growth in the results to which it leads. This is really inevitable, and is bound up with the first principles of *Satyagraha*. For, in *Satyagraha*, the minimum is also the maximum, and as it is the irreducible minimum, there is no question of retreat, and the only movement possible is an advance. In other struggles, even when they are righteous, the demand is first pitched a little higher so as to admit of future reduction, and hence the Law of Progression does not apply to all of them without exception. But I must explain how the Law of Progression comes into play when the minimum is also the maximum as in *Satyagraha*. The Ganga does not leave its course in search of tributaries. Even so does the *Satyagrahi* not leave his path which is sharp as the sword's edge. But as the tributaries spontaneously join the Ganga as it advances, so it is with the river that is *Satyagraha*.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: P. 208.

79. SATYAGRAHI MUST BE SINGLE-MINDED

THE rope-dancer, balancing himself upon a rope suspended at a height of twenty feet, must concentrate his attention upon the rope, and the least little error

in so doing means death for him, no matter on which side he falls. My experience of *Satyagraha* in South Africa has taught me that a *Satyagrahi* has to be, if possible, even more single-minded than the rope-dancer.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: P. 208.

80. HOW SATYAGRAHI SHOULD FACE DIFFICULTIES

A SATYAGRAHI, without being false to his faith, cannot disregard new difficulties which confront him while he is pursuing his own course. The adversary is not a *Satyagrahi*,—*Satyagraha* against *Satyagraha* is impossible,—and is not bound by any limit of maximum or minimum. He can, therefore, try, if he wishes, to frighten the *Satyagrahi* by raising novel issues. But the *Satyagrahi* has renounced all fear, tackles by *Satyagraha* the later difficulties as well as the former, and trusts that it will help him to hold his own against all odds. Therefore, as a *Satyagraha* struggle is prolonged, that is to say by the adversary, it is the adversary who stands to lose from his own stand-point, and it is the *Satyagrahi* who stands to gain.

—*Satyagraha in South Africa*: P. 210.

81. SATYAGRAHA NEVER WOUNDS

THE word '*Satyagraha*' is often most loosely used and is made to cover veiled violence. But, as the author of the word, I may be allowed to say that it excludes every form of violence, direct or indirect,

veiled or unveiled, and whether in thought, word or deed. It is a breach of *Satyagraha* to wish ill to an opponent or to say a harsh word to him or of him with the intention of harming him. And often the evil thought or the evil word may, in terms of *Satyagraha*, be more dangerous than actual violence used in the heat of the moment and perhaps repented and forgotten the next moment. *Satyagraha* is gentle, it never wounds. It must not be the result of anger or malice. It is never fussy, never impatient, never vociferous. It is the direct opposite of compulsion. It was conceived as a complete substitute for violence.

The reformer must have consciousness of the truth of his cause. He will not then be impatient with the opponent, he will be impatient with himself. He must be prepared even to fast unto death. Not everyone has the right or the capacity to do so. God is most exacting. He exacts humility from His votaries. Even fasts may take the form of coercion. But there is nothing in the world that in human hands does not lend itself to abuse. The human being is a mixture of good and evil, Jekyll and Hyde. But there is least likelihood of abuse when it is a matter of self-suffering.

—*Harijan*: April 15, 1933.

82. FASTING IN SATYAGRAHA

FASTING in *Satyagraha* has well-defined limits. You cannot fast against a tyrant, for it will be a species of violence done to him. You invite penalty from him for disobedience of his orders, but you cannot inflict

on yourselves penalties when he refuses to punish and renders it impossible for you to disobey his orders so as to compel infliction of penalty. Fasting can only be resorted to against a lover, not to extort rights but to reform him, as when a son fasts for a father who drinks.

It need not be pointed out that the above remarks are of a general character. The words *tyrant* and *lover* have also a general application. The one who does an injustice is styled 'tyrant'. The one who is in sympathy with you is the 'lover'.... There are two conditions attached to a *Satyagrahi* fast. It should be against the lover and for his reform, not for extorting rights from him.... I can fast against my father to cure him of a vice, but I may not in order to get from him an inheritance. The beggars of India, who sometimes fast against those who do not satisfy them, are no more *Satyagrahis* than children who fast against a parent for a fine dress. The former are impudent, the latter are childish.... A *Satyagrahi's* first concern is not the effect of his action. It must always be its propriety. He must have faith enough in his cause and his means, and know that success will be achieved in the end.

—*Young India*: May 1, 1924.

Fasting for Recovering Money

There are many forms of *Satyagraha*, of which fasting may or may not be one, according to the circumstances of the case. A man fasting for recovering money another owes him, can never be a true *Satya-*

grahi. *Satyagraha* can never be resorted to for personal gain. If fasting with a view to recovering money is to be encouraged, there would be no end of scoundrels blackmailing people by resorting to the means. I know that many such people are to be met within the country. It is not right to argue that those who rightly resort to fasting need not be condemned, because it is abused in a few cases. Any and everyone may not draw his own distinction between fasting—*Satyagraha*—true and false. What one regards as true *Satyagraha* may very likely be otherwise. *Satyagraha*, therefore, cannot be resorted to for personal gain, but only for the good of others. It can only be resorted to under wise guidance or after prolonged discipline. A *Satyagrahi* should always be ready to undergo suffering and pecuniary loss.

But *Satyagraha*, in the form of fasting, cannot be undertaken as against an opponent. Fasting can be resorted to only against one's nearest and dearest, and that solely for his or her good.

In a country like India, where the spirit of charity or pity is not lacking, it would be nothing short of an outrage to resort to fasting for recovering money. I know people who have given away money, quite against their will, but out of a false sense of pity. The *Satyagrahi* has, therefore, to proceed warily in a land like ours. It is likely that some men may succeed in recovering money due to them, by resorting to fasting; but instead of calling it a triumph of *Satyagraha*, I would call it a triumph of *Duragraha* or violence. The

triumph of *Satyagraha* consists in meeting death in the insistence on Truth. A *Satyagrahi* is always unattached to the attainment of the object of *Satyagraha;* one seeking to recover money cannot be so unattached. I am, therefore, clear that fasting for the sake of personal gain is nothing short of intimidation and the result of ignorance.

—*Young India*: Sep. 30, 1926.

Coercive Fasts

All spiritual fasts always influence those who come within the zone of their influence. That is why spiritual fasting is described as *tapas*. And all *tapas* invariably exerts purifying influence on those in whose behalf it is undertaken.

Of course, it is not to be denied that fasts can be really coercive. Such are fasts to attain a selfish object. A fast undertaken to wring money from a person or for fulfilling some such personal end, would amount to the exercise of coercion or undue influence. I would unhesitatingly advocate resistance of such undue influence. I have myself successfully resisted it in the fasts that have been undertaken or threatened against me. And if it is argued that the dividing line between a selfish and an unselfish end is often very thin, I would urge that a person who regards the end of a fast to be selfish or otherwise should resolutely refuse to yield to it, even though the refusal may result in the death of the fasting person. If people will cultivate the habit of disregarding fasts, which in their opinion are taken for unworthy ends, such fasts will be robbed of the

taint of coercion and undue influence. Like all human institutions, fasting can be both legitimately and illegitimately used. But as a great weapon in the armoury of *Satyagraha*, it cannot be given up because of its possible abuse. *Satyagraha* has been designed as an effective substitute for violence. This use is in its infancy and, therefore, not yet perfected. But as the author of modern *Satyagraha*, I cannot give up any of its manifold uses without forfeiting my claim to handle it in the spirit of a humble seeker.

—*Harijan*: May 6, 1933.

Fasting—a Potent Weapon

Fasting is potent weapon, in the *Satyagraha* armoury. It cannot be taken by every one. Mere physical capacity to take it is no qualification for it. It is of no use without a living faith in God. It should never be a mechanical effort, nor a mere imitation. It must come from the depth of one's soul. It is, therefore, always rare.

Thus fasting, though a very potent weapon, has necessarily very strict limitations and is to be taken only by those who have undergone previous training. And, judged by my standard, the majority of fasts do not at all come under the category of *Satyagraha* fasts and are, as they are popularly called, hunger-strikes undertaken without previous preparation and adequate thought. If the process is repeated too often, these hunger-strikes will lose what little efficacy they may possess and will become objects of ridicule.

—*Harijan*: March 18, 1939.

Fasting Has Its Own Science

Nowadays, quite a number of fasts are undertaken in the name of *Satyagraha*. Many of the known fasts have been meaningless, many may be said to have been impure. Fasting is a fiery weapon. It has its own science. No one, as far as I am aware, has a perfect knowledge of it. Unscientific experimentation with it is bound to be harmful to the one who fasts, and it may even harm the cause espoused. No one who has not earned the right to do so should, therefore, use this weapon. A fast may only be undertaken by him who is associated with the person against whom he fasts. The latter must be directly connected with the purpose for which the fast is being undertaken.... Success or failure depends entirely on the will of God and is not relevant to the issue under discussion.

There can be no room for selfishness, anger, lack of faith, or impatience in a pure fast.... In addition to Truth and Non-violence, a *Satyagrahi* should have the confidence that God will grant him the necessary strength and that, if there is the slightest impurity in the fast, he will not hesitate to renounce it at once. Infinite patience, firm resolve, single-mindedness of purpose, perfect calm, and no anger must of necessity be there. But since it is impossible for a person to develop all these qualities all at once, no one, who has not devoted himself to following the laws of *Ahimsa*, should undertake a *Satyagrahi* fast.

—*Harijan*: Oct. 13, 1940.

Fasting as a Last Resort

I have had the temerity to claim that fasting is an infallible weapon in the armoury of *Satyagraha*. I have used it myself, being the author of *Satyagraha*. .....One general principle, however, I would like to enunciate. A *Satyagrahi* should fast only as a last resort when all other avenues of redress have been explored and have failed. There is no room for imitation in fasts. He who has no inner strength should not dream of it, and never with attachment to success. But if a *Satyagrahi* once undertakes a fast from conviction, he must stick to his resolve whether there is a chance of his action bearing fruit or not. This does not mean that fasting cannot or can bear fruit. He who fasts in the expectation of fruit generally fails. And even if he does not seemingly fail, loses all the inner joy which a true fast holds.

—*Harijan*: April 21, 1946.

83. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Q. You often refer to the *Sermon on the Mount*. Do you believe in the verse: "If any man will take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also"? Does it not follow from the principle of non-violence? If so, then do you advise the weak and poor tenant of a village to submit gladly to the violent encroachment of the *Zamindar* on his '*abadi* land' or tenancy rights, which so often occurs in a village these days?

A. Yes. I would unhesitatingly advise tenants to evacuate the land belonging to a tyrant. That would

be like giving your cloak also when only the coat is demanded. To take what is required may be profitable; to have more given to you is highly likely to be a burden. To overload a stomach is to court slow death. A *Zamindar* wants his rent, he does not want his land. It would be a burden on him when he does not want it. When you give more to a robber than he needs, you spring a surprise on him, you give him a shock although agreeable. He has not been used to it. Historical instances are on record to show that such non-violent conduct has produced a wholesome effect upon evil-doers. These acts cannot be done mechanically; they must come out of conviction and love or pity for the other man. Nor need you work out all the apparent implications of my answer. If you do, you will come across blind alleys. Suffice it to say that, in the verse quoted by you, Jesus put in a picturesque and telling manner the great doctrine of Non-violent Non-co-operation. Your non-co-operation with your opponent is violent when you give a blow for a blow, and is ineffective in the long run. Your non-co-operation is non-violent when you give your opponent all in the place of just what he needs. You have disarmed him once for all by your apparent co-operation, which, in effect, is complete non-co-operation.

—*Harijan*: July 13, 1940.

84. GIVING AN ELL FOR AN INCH

IS not *Satyagraha* giving an ell when an inch is asked for by the wrong-doer, is it not giving the cloak also when only the coat is demanded? It may be asked

why this reversal of the ordinary process? The ordinary process is based on violence. If my life were regulated by violence in the last resort, I would refuse to give an inch lest an ell might be asked for. I would be a fool if I did otherwise. But if my life is regulated by non-violence, I should be prepared to and actually give an ell when an inch is asked for. By so doing, I produce on the usurper a strange and even pleasurable sensation. He would also be confounded and would not know what to do with me. So much for the 'enemy'. I, having made up my mind to surrender every non-essential, gain greater strength than ever before to die for the defence and preservation of what I hold to be essential.... Full surrender of non-essentials is a condition precedent to accession of internal strength to defend the essential by dying.

—*Harijan*: Nov. 10, 1940.

85. SPINNING WHEEL IN SATYAGRAHA

A SATYAGRAHI should have a living faith in God. That is because he has no other strength but that of his unflinching faith in Him. Without that faith, how can he undertake *Satyagraha?* I would ask any of you who feels that he has no such faith.... to forget the name of *Satyagraha*.

How many of you have a living faith in the spinning wheel? Do you believe in it as a symbol of Non-violence? If we had that faith, our spinning would have a potency all its own. Spinning is ever more potent than

Civil Disobedience; the latter may provoke anger and ill-will, spinning provokes no such feeling. My faith in the wheel I declared 20 years ago. I am declaring it again with the added strength of my 20 years' experience. If you feel you have no such faith, I would again ask you to forget *Satyagraha*.

A Living Thing

By itself, the wheel is a lifeless thing; but it becomes a living thing when we attribute certain virtues to it. Even *Ramanama* is by itself lifeless, but it has become a living symbol of the Deity because millions upon millions of people have consecrated it. Even a sinner may turn the wheel and add to the nation's wealth. I know people who have told me that the music of the spinning wheel has stilled their lust and other passions.

It is because I have invested the spinning wheel with that power, that it has become so essential to the *Satyagraha* of my conception in India. When I wrote *Hind Swaraj* in 1908, I had not even seen a spinning wheel; in fact, I had even mistaken a loom for it. But, even then, it was for me a symbol of non-violence. Let me, therefore, repeat that I do not want people to launch *Satyagraha*, if they have no such belief in the spinning wheel. They may offer *Satyagraha* on their own, but I could be of no use to them.

—*Harijan*: May 13, 1939.

86. RELIGIOUS SATYAGRAHA

MIXING up of motives is damaging in any species of *Satyagraha;* but in religious *Satyagraha,* it is altogether inadmissible. It is fatal to use or allow religious *Satyagraha* to be used as a cloak or a device for advancing an ulterior political or mundane objective.

As with regard to the goal, so with the means; unadulterated purity is of the very essence in this species of *Satyagraha.* The leader in such a movement must be a man of deeply spiritual life, preferably a *Brahmachari*—whether married or unmarried. He must be a believer in—as, in fact, everybody participating in such a movement must be—and practiser of the particular religious observance for which the movement is launched. The leader must be versed in the Science of *Satyagraha.* Truth and *Ahimsa* should shine through his speech. All his actions must be transparent through and through. Diplomacy and intrigue can have no place in his armoury.

Absolute belief in *Ahimsa* and in God is an indispensable condition in such *Satyagraha.*

In religious *Satyagraha,* there can be no room for aggressiveness, demonstrativeness, show. Those who take part in it must have equal respect and regard for the religious convictions and susceptibilities of those who profess a different faith from theirs. The slightest narrowness in their outlook is likely to be reflected magnified multifold in the opponent.

A Process of Self-Purification

Religious *Satyagraha* is, above all, a process of self-purification. It disdains mere numbers and external aids, since these cannot add to the *Satyagrahi's* self-purification. Instead, it relies utterly on God who is the fountain-head of all strength. Religious *Satyagraha,* therefore, best succeeds under the leadership of a true man of God who will compel reverence and love even of the opponent by the purity of his life, the utter selflessness of his mission and the breadth of his outlook.

—*Harijan*: May 27, 1939.

87. QUALIFICATIONS ESSENTIAL FOR SATYAGRAHI

IN *Satyagraha,* it is never the numbers that count; it is always the quality, more so when the forces of violence are uppermost.

Then, it is often forgotten that it is never the intention of a *Satyagrahi* to embarrass the wrong-doer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be, always to his heart. The *Satyagrahi's* object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrong-doer. He should avoid artificiality in all his doings. He acts naturally and from inward conviction.

Keeping these observations before his mind's eye, the reader will perhaps appreciate the following qualifications which, I hold, are essential for every *Satyagrahi* in India:

1. He must have a living faith in God, for He is his only Rock.

2. He must believe in Truth and Non-violence as his creed and, therefore, have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his truth and love expressed through his suffering.

3. He must be leading a chaste life and be ready and willing for the sake of his cause to give up his life and his possessions.

4. He must be a habitual *Khadi*-wearer and spinner. This is essential for India.

5. He must be a teetotaller and be free from the use of other intoxicants, in order that his reason may be always unclouded and his mind constant.

6. He must carry out with a willing heart all the rules of discipline as may be laid down from time to time.

7. He should carry out the jail rules, unless they are specially devised to hurt his self-respect.

The qualifications are not to be regarded as exhaustive. They are illustrative only.

—*Harijan*: March 25, 1939.

88. SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

IN *Satyagraha*, there is no such thing as disappointment or heart-burning. The struggle always goes on in some shape or other till the goal is reached. A *Satyagrahi* is indifferent whether it is Civil Disobedience or some other phase of the struggle to which he is called. Nor does he mind if, in the middle of the

Civil Disobedience march, he is called upon to halt and do something else. He must have faith that it is all for the best. My own experience hitherto has been that each suspension has found the people better equipped for the fight and for control over forces of violence. Therefore, in advising suspension, I dismiss from my mind the fear that it may lead to desertion and disbelief. If it does, I should not feel sorry, for it would be to me a sign that the deserters did not know what *Satyagraha* was, and the movement was better without those who did not know what they were doing.

—*Harijan*: April 1, 1939.

Helplessness Ruled Out in Satyagraha

Suspension should never bring despondency and weakness in a *Satyagraha* struggle. Even though people may be ready and non-violence ensured, and suspension is ordered through a miscalculation of the General, it cannot jeopardize the future of the movement. *Satyagraha* means readiness to suffer and a faith that the more innocent and pure the suffering, the more potent will it be in its effect. Helplessness is thus ruled out in *Satyagraha*. Suspension of Civil Disobedience, if it resulted in an accentuation of repression, would itself become *Satyagraha* in its ideal form.

—*Harijan*: June 3, 1939.

89. 'NOT TO REASON WHY'

I HAVE not yet known a General who has not altered time and again the plans of his campaign and

made eleventh-hour alterations in his orders. The ordinary fighting soldier knows nothing of these plans. In fact, they are a closely guarded secret unknown to all but the General himself. That is why Tennyson wrote those immortal lines:

"Theirs not to reason why;
Theirs not to make reply;
Theirs but to do and die."

But these words apply, if you please, to a *Satyagrahi* army more appropriately than to the ordinary army. For, a military General may change his plans in view of the changing situations every day. Military strategy depends on the changing tactics of the enemy. The *Satyagrahi* General has to obey his Inner Voice, for, over and above the situation outside, he examines himself constantly and listens to the dictates of the Inner Self. But, both in *Satyagraha* and military warfare, the position of the soldier is very nearly the same. He knows no rest, no certainty of movements; the only certainty for him is to face heavy odds and even death. His promise to be under discipline and to obey the General's command applies even during the period of suspension of hostilities. But I have not asked for this kind of discipline. I have always tried to carry conviction to my co-workers, to carry their hearts and their reason with me. I shall go on doing so always; but where you cannot follow, you will have to have faith. In ordinary warfare, a soldier cannot reason why.[1]

1. "True discipline gives enthusiastic obedience to instructions even though they do not satisfy reason. A volunteer exercises his reason when he chooses his General; but after having made the

In our warfare, there is enough scope for reasoning; but there is a limit to it. You will go on arguing until you are convinced; but when no conviction comes, you must fall back on faith.

—*Harijan*: June 10, 1939.

90. NECESSITY OF BRAHMACHARYA IN SATYAGRAHA

THERE must be power in the word of a *Satyagraha* General—not the power that the possession of limitless arms gives, but the power that purity of life, strict vigilance, and ceaseless application produce. This is impossible without the observance of *Brahmacharya*. It must be as full as it is humanly possible. *Brahmacharya* here does not mean mere physical self-control. It means much more. It means complete control over all the senses. Thus, an impure thought is a breach of *Brahmacharya;* so is anger. All power comes from the preservation and sublimation of the vitality that is responsible for creation of life. If the vitality is husbanded instead of being dissipated, it is transmuted into creative energy of the highest order.

Control over Thoughts

This vitality is continuously and even unconsciously dissipated by evil, or even rambling, disorderly, unwanted, thoughts. And since thought is the root of all speech and action, the quality of the latter corres-

choice, he does not waste his time and energy in scanning every instruction and testing it on the anvil of his reason before following it. His is 'not to reason why'."

—*Harijan*: March 30, 1940.

ponds to that of the former. Hence, perfectly controlled thought is itself power of the highest potency and can become self-acting. That seems to me to be the meaning of the silent prayer of the heart. If man is after the image of God, he has but to will a thing in the limited sphere allotted to him and it becomes. Such power is impossible in one who dissipates his energy in any way whatsoever, even as steam kept in a leaky pipe yields no power. The sexual act divorced from the deliberate purpose of generation is a typical and gross form of dissipation and has, therefore, been specially and rightly chosen for condemnation. But in one, who has to organize vast masses of mankind for non-violent action, the full control described by me has to be attempted and virtually achieved.

This control is unattainable save by the grace of God. There is a verse in the Second Chapter of the *Gita* which, freely rendered, means: "Sense-effects remain in the abeyance whilst one is fasting or whilst the particular sense is starved, but the hankering does not cease except when one sees God face to face." This control is not mechanical or temporary. Once attained, it is never lost.

—*Harijan*: July 23, 1938.

91. PHYSICAL TRAINING FOR A SATYAGRAHI

AHIMSA requires certain duties which can be done only by those with a trained physique. It is, therefore, most necessary to consider what kind of physical

training a non-violent person should receive.... Let us, then, think of the physical training required by a *Satyagrahi*. If the *Satyagrahi* is not healthy in mind and body, he may perhaps fail in mustering complete fearlessness. He should have the capacity to stand guard at a single spot day and night; he must not fall ill even if he has to bear cold and heat and rain; he must have the strength to go to places of peril, to rush to scenes of fire, and the courage to wander about alone in desolate jungles and haunts of death; he will bear, without a grumble, severe beatings, starvation and worse, and will keep to his post of duty without flinching; he will have the resourcefulness and capacity to plunge into a seemingly impenetrable scene of rioting; he will have the longing and capacity to run, with the name of God on his lips, to the rescue of men living on the top storeys of buildings enveloped in flames; he will have the fearlessness to plunge into a flood in order to rescue people being carried off by it, or to jump down a well to save a drowning person.

Faith in God Essential

This list can be extended *ad libitum*. The substance of it all is that we should cultivate the capacity to run to the rescue of people in danger and distress, and to suffer cheerfully any amount of hardship that may be inflicted upon us. He who accepts this fundamental principle, will easily be able to frame rules of physical training for *Satyagrahis*. I have a firm conviction that the very foundation of this training is

faith in God. If that is absent, all the training one may have received is likely to fail at the critical moment.

Let no one poohpooh my statement.... I am simply trying to state the view in terms of the Science of *Satyagraha* as I have known and developed it. The only weapon of the *Satyagrahi* is God, by whatsoever name one knows Him. Without Him, the *Satyagrahi* is devoid of strength before an opponent armed with monstrous weapons. Most people lie prostrate before physical might. But he, who accepts God as his only Protector, will remain unbent before the mightiest earthly power.

Observance of Brahmacharya

As faith in God is essential in a *Satyagrahi*, even so is *Brahmacharya*. Without *Brahmacharya*, the *Satyagrahi* will have no lustre, no inner strength to stand unarmed against the whole world. *Brahmacharya* may have here the restricted meaning of conservation of the vital energy brought about by sexual restraint, and not the comprehensive definition I have given of it. He who intends to live on spare diet and without any external remedies, and still wants to have physical strength, has need to conserve his vital energy. It is the richest capital man can ever possess. He who can preserve it ever gains renewed strength out of it. He who uses it up, consciously or unconsciously, will ultimately be impotent. His strength will fail him at the right moment. I have often written about the ways and means of conserving this energy. Let the reader turn to my writings and carry out the instructions. He who lusts

with the eye or the touch can never conserve his vital energy, nor the man who lusts after flesh-pots. Those who hope to conserve this energy, without strict observance of the rules, will no more succeed than those who hope to swim against the current without being exhausted. He who restrains himself physically and sins with his thoughts, will fare worse than he who, without professing to observe *Brahmacharya*, lives the life of a restrained householder. For, he who lusts with the thought will ever remain unsated, and will end his life a moral wreck and burden on the earth. Such a one can never be a full *Satyagrahi*. Nor can one who hankers after wealth and fame.

This is the foundation of the physical training for a *Satyagrahi*. The detailed structure of the course can easily be built in consonance with this foundation.

No Need of Lethal Weapons

It should now be clear that in the physical training of a *Satyagrahi*, there is no room for lethal weapons like the sword or the spear. For, far more terrible weapons than we have seen are in existence today, and newer ones are being invented every day. Of what fear will a sword rid him who has to cultivate the capacity to overcome all fear—real or imaginary? I have not yet heard of a man having shed all fear by learning sword-play. Mahavir and others who imbibed *Ahimsa* did not do so because they knew the use of weapons, but because, in spite of the knowledge of their use, they shed all fear.

A slight introspection will show that he who has always depended on the sword will find it difficult to throw it away. But having deliberately discarded it, he is likely to find his *Ahimsa* more lasting than that of him who, not knowing its use, fancies he will not fear it. But that does not mean that in order to be truly non-violent, one must beforehand possess and know the use of arms. By parity of reasoning, one might say that only a thief can be honest, only a diseased person can be healthy, and only a dissolute person can be a *Brahmachari*. The fact is, that we have formed the habit of thinking along traditional grooves and will not get out of them. And as we cannot take a detached view, we cannot draw the right conclusions and get caught in delusive snares.

—*Harijan*: Oct. 13, 1940.

92. THE IDEAL SATYAGRAHI

Q. There is one solitary *Satyagrahi* in one of our villages. The rest do not worry about violence or non-violence. What discipline is that single *Satyagrahi* to undergo?

A. Yours is a good question. The solitary *Satyagrahi* has to examine himself. If he has universal love and if he fulfils the conditions implied in such a state, it must find its expression in his daily conduct. He would be bound with the poorest in the village by ties of service. He would constitute himself the scavenger, the nurse, the arbitrator of disputes, and the teacher of the children of the village. Every one, young and

old, would know him; though a householder, he would be leading a life of restraint; he would make no distinction between his and his neighbour's children; he would own nothing, but would hold what wealth he has in trust for others, and would, therefore, spend out of it just sufficient for his barest needs. His needs would, as far as possible, approximate those of the poor; he would harbour no untouchability, and would, therefore, inspire people of all castes and creeds to approach him with confidence.

Such is the ideal *Satyagrahi*. Our friend will always endeavour to come up to, wherever he falls short of, the ideal, fill in the gaps in his education, will not waste a single moment. His house will be a busy hive of useful activities, centering round spinning. His will be a well-ordered household.

Such a *Satyagrahi* will not find himself single-handed for long. The village will unconsciously follow him. But whether they do or not, at a time of emergency, he will, single-handed, effectively deal with it or die in the attempt. But I firmly hold that he will have converted a number of others.

—*Harijan*: Aug. 4, 1940.

93. THE NON-VIOLENT SANCTION

Q. What is the place of *Satyagraha* in making the rich realize their duty towards the poor?

A. The same as against the foreign power. *Satyagraha* is a law of universal application. Beginning with

the family, its use can be extended to every other circle. Supposing, a landowner exploits his tenants and mulcts them of the fruit of their toil by appropriating it to his own use. When they expostulate with him, he does not listen and raises objections that he requires so much for his wife, so much for his children, and so on. The tenants, or those who have espoused their cause and have influence, will make an appeal to his wife to expostulate with her husband. She would probably say that for herself she does not need his exploited money. The children will say likewise that they would earn for themselves what they need.

Supposing further, that he listens to nobody or that his wife and children combine against the tenants, they will not submit. They will quit if asked to do so, but they will make it clear that the land belongs to him who tills it. The owner cannot till all the land himself and he will have to give in to their just demands. It may, however, be that the tenants are replaced by others. Agitation, short of violence, will then continue till the replacing tenants see their error and make common cause with the evicted tenants. Thus, *Satyagraha* is a process of educating public opinion, such that it covers all the elements of society and, in the end, makes itself irresistible. Violence interrupts the process and prolongs the real revolution of the whole social structure.

The conditions necessary for the success of *Satyagraha* are: (1) The *Satyagrahi* should not have any hatred in his heart against the opponent. (2) The

issue must be true and substantial. (3) The *Satyagrahi* must be prepared to suffer till the end for his cause.

—*Harijan*: March 31, 1946.

94. AN INSTANCE OF BRILLIANT FAILURE

PASSIVE Resistance is aimed at removal in a most approved manner of bad laws, customs or other evils, and is designed to be a complete and effective substitute for forcible methods including *hooliganism* and lynch law. It is an appeal to the heart of man. Often reason fails. It is dwarfed by self. The theory is that an adequate appeal to the heart never fails. Seeming failure is not of the Law of *Satyagraha*, but of incompetence of the *Satyagrahi* by whatever cause induced. It may not be possible to give a complete historical instance. The name of Jesus at once comes to the lips. It is an instance of brilliant failure. And he has been acclaimed in the West as Prince of Passive Resisters. I showed, years ago in South Africa, that the adjective "passive" was a misnomer, at least as applied to Jesus. He was the most active resister known perhaps to history. His was non-violence *par excellence*.

—*Harijan*: June 30, 1946.

95. MEANING OF 'DO OR DIE'

IN God's world, unmixed evil never prospers. God rules even where Satan seems to hold sway, because the latter exists only on His sufferance. Some people say that *Satyagraha* is of no avail against a person who has no moral sense. I join issue with that.

The stoniest heart must melt if we are true and have enough patience. A *Satyagrahi* lays down his life, but never gives up. That is the meaning of "Do or Die" slogan. That slogan does not mean "Kill or be killed". That would be wilful distortion and a travesty of its true meaning. The true meaning is that we must do our duty and die in the course of performing it, if necessary. To die without killing is the badge of a *Satyagrahi*.

—*Harijan*: July 21, 1946.

96. TRAINING FOR SATYAGRAHA

A FRIEND has gently posed the question as to what a *Satyagrahi* should do to prevent looting by *goondas*. If he had understood the secret of *Satyagraha*, he would not have put it.

To lay down one's life, even alone, for what one considers to be right, is the very core of *Satyagraha*. More, no man can do. If a man is armed with a sword he might lop off a few hands, but ultimately he must surrender to superior force or else die fighting. The sword of the *Satyagrahi* is love, and the unshakable firmness that comes from it. He will regard as brothers the hundreds of *goondas* that confront him; and, instead of trying to kill them, he will choose to die at their hands and thereby live.

This is straight and simple. But how can a solitary *Satyagrahi* succeed in the midst of a huge population? A solitary *Satyagrahi* will be like a drop in the ocean. Thus argues the correspondent.

No Running Away from Danger

My reply is that a *Satyagrahi* may never run away from danger, irrespective of whether he is alone or in the company of many. He will have fully performed his duty if he dies fighting. The same holds good in armed warfare. It applies with greater force in *Satyagraha*. Moreover, the sacrifice of one will evoke the sacrifice of many, and may possibly produce big results. There is always this possibility. But one must scrupulously avoid the temptation of a desire for results.

Art of Self-Defence

I believe that every man and woman should learn the art of self-defence in this age. This is done through arms in the West. Every adult man is conscripted for army training for a definite period. The training for *Satyagraha* is meant for all, irrespective of age or sex. The more important part of the training here is mental, not physical. There can be no compulsion in mental training. The surrounding atmosphere no doubt acts on the mind, but that cannot justify compulsion.

It follows that shopkeepers, traders, millhands, labourers, farmers, clerks, in short, every one ought to consider it his or her duty to get the necessary training in *Satyagraha*.

Superior to Armed Resistance

Satyagraha is always superior to armed resistance. This can only be effectively proved by demonstration,

not by argument. It is the weapon that adorns the strong. It can never adorn the weak. By weak is meant the weak in mind and spirit, not in body. That limitation is a quality to be prized, and not a defect to be deplored.

One ought also to understand one of its other limitations. It can never be used to defend a wrong cause.

Satyagraha Brigades

Satyagraha brigades can be organized in every village and in every block of buildings in the cities. Each brigade should be composed of those persons who are well-known to the organizers. In this respect, *Satyagraha* differs from armed defence. For the latter, the State impresses the service of everybody. For a *Satyagraha* brigade, only those are eligible who believe in *Ahimsa* and *Satya*. Therefore, an intimate knowledge of the persons enlisted is necessary for the organizers.

—*Harijan*: March 17, 1946.

97. THE WAY OF SATYAGRAHA

WE cannot sit still in the face of crime. Only a perfect being can afford to lose himself within himself and withdraw completely from the cares and responsibilities of the world. But who can claim that perfection?

On the high sea, a sudden calm is always regarded by experienced pilots and mariners with concern. Absolute calm is not the Law of the Ocean. It is the

same with the Ocean of Life. More often than not, it portends rough weather. A *Satyagrahi* would, therefore, neither retaliate, nor would he submit to the criminal, but seek to cure him by curing himself. He will not try to ride two horses at a time, *viz.*, to pretend to follow the Law of *Satyagraha*, while at the same time, seeking police aid.[1] He must forswear the latter, in order to follow the former. If the criminal himself chooses to hand himself to the police, it would be a different matter. You cannot expect to touch his heart and win his confidence, if at the same time you are prepared to go to the police and inform against him. That would be gross betrayal of trust. A reformer cannot afford to be an informer.

—*Harijan*: Aug. 11, 1946.

98. NON-VIOLENT SELF-DEFENCE

MANKIND has all along tried to justify violence and war in terms of unavoidable self-defence. It is a simple rule that the violence of the aggressor can only be defeated by superior violence of the defender. All over the world, men have thus been caught in a mad race for armaments, and no one yet knows at what point of time the world will be really safe enough for

1. "It follows that we may not seek police assistance to deal with the disease.... The way I have suggested is the way of reform, conversion, love. Seeking police assistance is the way of punishment, fear, want of affection if not actual disaffection. The two methods, therefore, cannot run together. The way of reform appears at some stage or other to be difficult, but it is in reality the easiest."

—*Young India*: May 7, 1931.

turning the sword into the plough. Mankind has not yet mastered the true art of self-defence.

Suffering—The Truest Form of Self-Defence

But great teachers, who have practised what they preached, have successfully shown that true defence lies along the path of non-retaliation. It may sound paradoxical, but this is what I mean. Violence always thrives on counter-violence. The aggressor has always a purpose behind his attack; he wants something to be done, some object to be surrendered by the defender. Now, if the defender steels his heart and is determined not to surrender even one inch, and at the same time to resist the temptation of matching the violence of the aggressor by violence, the latter can be made to realize in a short while that it will not be paying to punish the other party and his will cannot be imposed in that way. This would involve suffering. It is this unalloyed self-suffering which is the truest form of self-defence which knows no surrender.

Christ's Act of Non-Resistance

Someone might ask that, if through such non-resistance the defender is likely to lose his life, how can it be called self-defence? Jesus lost his life on the Cross and the Roman Pilate won. I do not agree. Jesus had won, as the world's history has abundantly shown. What does it matter if the body was dissolved in the process so long as by the Christ's act of non-resistance the forces of good were released in society?

The art of true self-defence, by means of which man gains his life by losing it, has been mastered and exemplified in the history of individuals. The method has not been perfected for application by large masses of mankind. India's *Satyagraha* is a very imperfect experiment in that direction.

—*Harijan*: August 31, 1947.

99. SATYAGRAHA AND SOCIALISM

TRUTH and *Ahimsa* must incarnate in Socialism. In order that they can, the votary must have a living faith in God. Mere mechanical adherence to Truth and *Ahimsa*, is likely to break down at the critical moment. Hence have I said that Truth is God. This God is a living Force. Our life is of that Force. That Force resides in, but is not the body. He who denies the existence of that great Force, denies to himself the use of that inexhaustible Power and thus remains impotent. He is like a rudderless ship which, tossed about here and there, perishes without making any headway. The Socialism of such takes them nowhere, what to say of the society in which they live.

The fact is that it has always been a matter of strenuous research to know this great Force and its hidden possibilities.

Discovery of Satyagraha

My claim is that in the pursuit of that search lies the discovery of *Satyagraha*. It is not, however, claimed that all the Laws of *Satyagraha* have been laid down or found. This I do say, fearlessly and firmly, that

every worthy object can be achieved by the use of *Satyagraha*. It is the highest and infallible means, the greatest force. Socialism will not be reached by any other means. *Satyagraha* can rid society of all evils, political, economic and moral.

—*Harijan*: July 20, 1947.

100. SATYAGRAHA IS INVINCIBLE

IT is the fashion nowadays to use the word "*Satyagraha*" for any kind of resistance, armed or otherwise. This looseness harms the community and degrades *Satyagraha*. If, therefore, we understand all the implications of *Satyagraha* and know that the living God of Truth and Love is with the *Satyagrahi*, we will have no hesitation in believing that it is invincible.

—*Harijan*: Nov. 23, 1947.

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WHAT IS SATYAGRAHA?

"WHEN DANIEL disregarded the laws of the Medes and Persians which offended his conscience and meekly suffered the punishment for his disobedience, he offered Satyagraha in its purest form.

"Socrates would not refrain from preaching what he knew to be Truth to the Athenian youth, and bravely suffered the punishment of death. He was, in this case, a Satyagrahi.

"Prahalad disregarded the orders of his father because he considered them to be repugnant to his conscience. He uncomplainingly and cheerfully bore the tortures to which he was subjected at the instance of his father.

"Mirabai, who is said to have offended her husband by following her own conscience, was content to live in separation from him and bore with quiet dignity and resignation all the injuries that are said to have been done to her in order to bend her to her husband's will. Both Prahalad and Mirabai practised Satyagraha.

"It must be remembered that neither Daniel nor Socrates, neither Prahalad nor Mirabai had any ill-will towards their persecutors. Daniel and Socrates are regarded as having been model citizens of the States to which they belonged; Prahalad a model son, Mirabai a model wife."

—*M. K. GANDHI*